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A Defence of the  
*Canon of the New Testament,*

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في شهر ربيع



A N  
HISTORICAL ACCOUNT,  
AND  
DEFENCE,  
OF THE  
C A N O N  
OF THE  
**New Testament.**

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In Answer to *AMYNTOR.*

*By Stephen Nye*

*1674  
Darling*

*The weaker-sighted ever look too nigh;  
But their Disputes the Sacred Page make good:  
As doubted Tenures, which long Pleadings try,  
Authentick grow; by being much withstood.*

By Sir William Davenant,  
in Gondib.

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L O N D O N,

Printed by J. Darby, for Jonathan Robinson at the  
Golden Lion in St. Paul's Church-yard, and Andrew  
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A N

HISTORICAL ACCOUNT,  
AND  
DEFENCE,  
OF THE

*Canon of the New Testament.*

S I R,

**A**T the Suggestion of a Learned Friend; I am about to answer to a Book, *Amyntor*; dedicated, to very formidable Patrons. For in his Title Page, the Author makes this address.

*Dē quibus imperium Animarum est, Um-  
bræq; silentes,  
Et Ghaos, & Phlegethon, loca nocte tacen-  
tia latè;*

*Sit mihi fas audita loqui: sit Numine  
vestro,  
Pandere res altā terrā & caligine mersas.*

A 3

We

We may English it, thus.

Ye Gods and Ghosts of *Hell*, to Human  
fight  
Not yet reveal'd, and thou whole Realm  
of *Night*,  
Protect me; that I safely may relate  
The *blacker* Secrets of our Church, and  
State.

There will not want those, who will say hereupon: From praying, to the Holy Virgin, and the Saints; *Amyntor* is improved, into invoking the Devil and his Angels. They will say, he is the first, that ever publicly put himself, under such a Protection. That however, a Book directed against the Sacred Canon, would not easily find other Patrons: So that this Extravagance of the Author, was as much the Effect, of Necessity; as of Inclination. In short, I wish, he had not given occasion to his Adversaries, to jest upon him; for what (I believe) was not design, but obreption and oversight.

In the first place, he presents us with a Catalogue of Antient Books, and other Writings; concerning which, he is of a different (and contrary) mind, in divers parts of his Book.

\*

Some

Sometimes, he seems to complain, that we do not receive 'em into the Canon of the New Testament; there being (according to him) the same Reasons to admit, or to exclude them, as for the Gospels, Epistles, and other Writings of our Canon. Namely, that so many of 'em were Cited by the Fathers, as Scripture; and the rest, by very considerable Parties of Christians: which (he saith again) is as much as can be alledged, for any of the Books of our Canon; and more than can be truly said, for divers of them. But otherwhile, he speaks to this Effect: That they are the *Forgeries*, partly of zealous Bigots; who were solicitous to provide these Crutches, for lame Christianity: and partly of some Heathens, that were tickl'd with the pleasure of imposing on the (known) simplicity, and credulity, of the first Christians; who were wont to swallow any Book as Divine Revelation, if it had but a great many Miracles, sprinkled with a few good Morals.

He hath disposed these Books, under the following Titles, and Distinctions.

I. Books, reported to be written by Christ himself, or that particularly concern him. His Letter, in answer to that of *Abgarus*, King of *Edessa*. A Letter to *Peter* and *Paul*.

A 4

His

His Parables and Sermons. A Hymn, which he secretly taught to his Apostles and Disciples. A Book of the Magic of Christ; if it be not the same with the Epistle to *Peter* and *Paul*. A Book of the Nativity of our Saviour, of the Holy Virgin his Mother, and her Midwife. But he believes, this last is the same with the Gospel of *James*.

II. By the Virgin *Mary*, or concerning her. Her Epistle to *Ignatius*. Her Letter to the Inhabitants of *Messina*. Her Book concerning the Miracles of Christ, and the Ring of King *Solomon*. A Book of the Nativity of the Virgin *Mary*, and another of her Death.

III. By St. *Peter*. *Peter's* Gospel, Acts, Revelation, Doctrine, Judgment, Preaching, Liturgy, Itinerary; being so many several Books: but the last, he thinks, is the same with the Recognitions of St. *Clement*; wherein we have a very particular account of *Peter's* Voyages and Performances. An Epistle of *Peter* to *Clement*.

IV. By St. *Andrew*. His Gospel, and Acts.

V. By St. *James*. A Liturgy, and Gospel. His Book concerning the Death of the Virgin

*Virgin Mary*; but there are Reasons (he saith) to believe, *John* was author of it, not *James*.

VI. By St. *John*. His Acts, Liturgy, Itinerary, and Traditions. Another Gospel, different from ours. His Book of the Death of the *Virgin Mary*; mentioned twice already.

VII. By St. *Philip*. The Gospel of *Philip*, the Acts of *Philip*.

VIII. By St. *Bartholomew*. A Gospel.

IX. By St. *Thomas*. A Gospel, Acts, Revelation, and Itinerary; as also a Book of the Infancy of Christ.

X. By St. *Matthew*. A Liturgy. There is also another by *Mark*.

XI. By St. *Thaddeus*. A Gospel.

XII. By St. *Matthias*. A Gospel, and Traditions.

XIII. By St. *Paul*. *Paul's* Revelation, and Preaching; his *Anabaticon*, and Narrative concerning the charming of Vipers. His Epistle to the *Laodiceans*; his Second Epistle

Epistle to the *Ephesians*; his Third to the *Thessalonians*, and (again) to the *Corinthians*; his Gospel. His Epistles to *Seneca*; his Acts. The Acts also of *Paul* and *Thecla*.

XIV. Other Gospels and Remarkable Books. The prophetical Gospel of *Eve*, the Gospel of the Twelve Apostles, the Gospels of the *Hebrews* and the *Egyptians*; the Gospel of *Judas Iscariot*. The Books of *Adam*, the Prophecy of *Enoch*; the Revelation, and Astrology of *Abraham*. The Testament of the twelve Patriarchs, the Assumption of *Moses*, the Book of *Eldad* and *Medad*, the Psalms of King *Solomon*, the Vision of *Isaiab*, the Revelation of *Zechary*.

XV. Some other general Pieces. The Apostles Creed. The Doctrine of the Apostles; there are, besides, Doctrines attributed to every one of the Apostles singly, and also to their Companions and immediate Successors. The Doctrines of the twelve Apostles composed (by them) with the assistance of St. *Paul*. The Canons and Constitutions of the Apostles. The Acts of the Apostles, written by themselves. The Gospel of Perfection; the Precepts of *Peter* and *Paul*. The Itinerary of all the Apostles, as well as of every one of them singly, was formerly extant. XVI.



XVI. Writings of the Companions and Disciples of the Apostles. The Epistles of *Clemens Romanus* to the *Corinthians*; his Recognitions, Decretals, and other Pieces bearing his Name. The Epistles of *Ignatius*. An Epistle of *Polycarp* to the *Philippians*, with his other Writings: the Acts of the Martyrdom of *Ignatius*, and of *Polycarp*. The Pastor of *Hermas*, an Epistle of *Barnabas*, the works of *Dionysius Areopagita*: an Epistle of *Marcellus* (Disciple of *Peter*) to *Nereus* and *Achilleus*: his Treatise of the conflict of *Peter* and *Simon Magus*. The Life of *St. John*, by *Prochorus*; the Petition of *Veronica* to *Herod*, on behalf of *Christ*; the Passion of *Timothy*, by *Polycrates*; the Passion of *Peter* and *Paul*, in two Books, by *Linus*. Two Epistles of *Martial* of *Limoges*; his Life by *Aurelianus*: the Gospel of *Nicodemus*; the History of the Apostolical Conflict, by *Abdias*; the Passion of *St. Andrew*, by the Presbyters of *Achaia*. The Epistle of *Evodius*, entituled *the Light*; the Altercation of *Jason* and *Papiscus*: the Acts of *Titus*, composed by *Zena* companion of *Paul*: with a multitude of other Acts and Passions. The Gospel of *Barnabas*; the Passion of *Barnabas*: the Epistles of *Joseph* of *Arimathea*, to the *Britains*.

XVII. Pieces alledged in favor of Christianity, which were forged under the names of Heathens. The works of *Trismegistus*, and *Asclepius*; the Books of *Zoroaster*, and *Histaspes*, Kings in the Orient; the *Sibyllin* Oracles. A Letter of *Pontius Pilate*, to *Tiberius*; the speech of *Tiberius*, to the Senate: the Epistle of *Lentulus*, giving a Description of the Person of Christ. The Epistles or Orders of *Adrian*, *Antoninus Pius*, and *M. Aurelius*, in favor of the Christians; extant in *Justin Martyr*.

Upon this Catalogue, and from it, *Amyntor* makes divers (marvellous) Remarks, and Inferences; to this effect. The Antients reckned the Pastor of *Herma*s, the Epistles of *Barnabas*, of *Polycarp* and *Clemens Romanus*, to be as good, as any part of the New Testament. And if, saith He again, these pieces are not Impostures; but were really *theirs*, whose name they bear: why are they not received into the Canon of Scripture; the Authors of them having been the Companions and Fellow-laborers of the Apostles, as well as *St. Mark* and *St. Luke*? If this quality was sufficient, to intitle the two latter to Inspiration; why should it not do as much for the two first? And if this be not all the reason; pray, let us

us know the true one: for *I never heard of any other*. The second Epistle of *Peter*, the Epistles of *James* and *Jude*, the second and third of *John*, the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, and the Revelation, were not approved as Canonical; till after the time of *Eusebius*: therefore, why may not we also establish the Epistles of *Clemens*, and of *Barnabas*; if indeed they be theirs?

It may be, *saieth our Author*, all the Books (particularly, all the Gospels) in the foregoing Catalogue, were not spurious or forged; but rather, Genuine, and of right belonging to the Canon of Scripture: as in the dark Ages of Popery, divers Books were added to the Bible; so in the no less ignorant first Ages of Christianity, other Books might be taken from it; because they did not sute with all the Opinions of the strongest side. How many true, or false Gospels were extant in *Luke's* time, God knows: but that there were several, may be inferred from his own words. "*Many*" have taken in hand, to set forth a declaration of those things, which are believed "*among us*"; as *they* delivered 'em to us, "*who* (from the beginning) were Eye-witnesses, and Ministers of the WORD.  
*Luke* 1. 1, 2, 3,

Several Books (particularly Gospels) of the before-recited Catalogue, were quoted by

by the most celebrated Fathers, says *Amyntor*; to prove important Points of the Christian Religion: and this Testimony of those Fathers, was the principal Reason, of our putting the Gospels and Epistles, that are now approved and received, into the present Canon. *Eusebius* rejects the Acts, Gospels, Preaching, and Revelation of *Peter*; because no Antient nor Modern Writer, says he, has quoted proofs out of them: on the same account, he rejects also the Gospels of *Thomas*, *Matthias*, and such like; as also the Acts of *Andrew*, *John*, and other Apostles, as spurious. But herein *Eusebius* was mistaken; as appears, says our Author still, by the Testimonies I have cited. Had *Eusebius* found any of These Pieces, alledged by precedent Orthodox Writers; he would have owned them as part of the Scripture-Canon: but I have shown, proofs were quoted out of some of them; so that they may still belong to the Canon, for all *Eusebius*.

It is certain, so he goes on; the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, the Epistles of *James* and *Jude*, the second and third of *John*, the second of *Peter*, and the *Revelation*, were doubted by the soundest of the Antients; and yet are received by the Moderns: I say therefore, by more than a parity of reason; the Preaching and Revelation of *Peter* were received by the Antients, and ought not to be

be rejected by the Moderns, if the approbation of the Antients (or Fathers) be a proper recommendation of Books.

The Council of *Laodicea*, convened about the year 360, is the first Assembly in which the Canon of Scripture was established. In such a variety of Books, they could not determine which were the true Monuments of the Apostles; but either by a particular *Revelation*, of which we hear not a word; or by the *Testimony of their Predecessors*: I have the same Testimony, for the Books I defend. He means, for the Preaching and Revelation of *Peter*, the Pastor of *Hermas*, the Epistle of *Barnabas*; and divers Gospels.

He wishes, some qualified Person would endeavor, to extricate the erroneous out of these and such like difficulties; that we may discover, by some *infallible marks*, in such an extraordinary number of Books (all of them equally pretending to Divine Origin) which of them are *the proper Rule*: lest we unhappily mistake a false one, for the true.

He tells us again, the Philosopher *Celsus* exclaims against the liberty which Christians had taken, of changing the first Writing of the Gospel, three or four, or more times; that so they might deny whatsoever was urged against them, as retracted before. The *Manichees*, a very considerable Sect, shewed

shewed other Scriptures; and denied the *Genuineness* of the whole New Testament: particularly *Faustus* (a *Manichee*) complains, the *Testament of the Son* is corrupted, by obscure Persons, who have put the Names of the Apostles and their Successors, to false Gospels, that are full of Mistakes, and of contradictory Relations and Opinions. After the decease of Christ and the Apostles, *says the Manichee*, a sett of Half-Jews picked up (from Fame and flying Reports) a great many Lies and Errors; which they also published, under the names of the Apostles, and of those that succeeded them. Add to all this, that; the *Ebionites* or *Nazarens*, who were the oldest Christians, had a different Copy (from ours) of *St. Matthew's Gospel*. The *Marcionites* read the Gospel of *St. Luke* very diversly from us; the Gospel of *St. John* was attributed to *Cerintus*: all the Epistles of *Paul* were denied by some, a different Copy shown of them by others. It would be commendably done, *he says*, to prevent the Mischievous Inferences, which Hereticks may draw from all this; and to remove the Scruples of doubting, but sincere Christians: as for his own part, if he is in any fault about these matters, it is not too much Incredulity; but that, it may be, he believes more Scripture than his Adversaries. He gives hopes, he will

will write a History of the Canon of Scripture; the fairest, nay the only one of the kind, that ever was penned.

He concludes with an extract, as he saith, out of *Mr. Dodwel*; to this purpose. The Books of the New Testament lay hid in the Archives of Churches, and Desks of private Persons; to whom they were written: till the latter end of the Reign of the Emperor *Trajan*, or rather of *Adrian*; that is, till about the year after Christ 130. Even the latter Evangelists had not seen the Gospels of the former; else *St. Luke* would never have given such a different Genealogy of our Saviour, from that by *St. Matthew*, without the reason of so wide a dissent: nor would there be found in the other Evangelists so many apparent contradictions, as have harassed the Wits of Learned Men, almost since the first constitution of the Canon. *St. Luke* plainly intimates that, the Evangelists and Gospels he had seen, were not furnisht with the relations they make, by Eye-witnesses; as himself was. We have at this day, says *Mr. Dodwel*, some writings of *Ignatius*, *Polycarp*, *Hermas*, *Barnabas*, *Clementis Romanus*; these were later than the other Writers of the New Testament, except *Jude* and *John*: and yet *Hermas* cites nothing out of the New Testament; nor in all the rest, are any of the Evangelists nam-

ed. If they cite any passages, like to those we read in our present Gospels; they are withal so unlike, that it cannot be known, whether they are alledged out of ours, or some Apocryphal Gospels: they cite also Passages which are not in the present Gospels. Nay, we cannot say from those *Canonical Books* that were last written, that; the Church knew any thing of the Gospels, or that the Clergy made a common use of them. We can't tell, whence *St. Paul* had that moral Aphorism of our Saviour; which he quotes, *Acts* 20. 35. In those early times, the true Writings of the Apostles used to be bound up, together with those now called *Apocryphal* and *Spurious*; that it was not manifest, by any mark or public Censure of the Church, which of them should be preferred to the other.

Upon this judgment made by *Mr. Dodwel*, *Anyntor* says; he agrees with *Mr. Dodwel*, as to matter of Fact. And he shuts up all, with adding, that; whosoever has an inclination to write on this Subject, is now furnisht with a great many curious Disquisitions; whereon to show his Penetration, and Judgment. As how the immediate Successors and Disciples of the Apostles, could so grossly confound the genuine Writings of their Masters; with such as are falsely attributed to them? And if they were in  
the



the dark about these matters, in those early times; How came the following Ages by a better Light? Why all those Books, which are cited by *Clement Alexandrinus*, and the rest, should not be accounted equally *authentic*? And lastly, what stress can we lay, on the Writings of those Fathers; who not only contradict one another, but are also inconsistent with themselves, in their relations of the very same Facts?

The whole amounts, to thus much. " The  
 " Books we now own as Canonical, were  
 " never seen; till about 130 years after  
 " Christ: and when they appeared, 'twas  
 " not possible to distinguish them, but by  
 " some *Revelation*; from Apocryphal Gos-  
 " pels and Epistles, which bore the names  
 " (as these do) of the Apostles and their  
 " Synergists. From the earliest times; *con-*  
 " *trary* Copies of them were shown; and  
 " not one of them but was rejected, by  
 " considerable and potent Parties of Chris-  
 " tians: the very Parties that received  
 " them, have changed 'em three or four,  
 " or more times; that they might be at li-  
 " berty, to affirm or deny, as present Exi-  
 " gence should require. The *Figments* of  
 " *Hermas*, the *Tract* of *Barnabas*, and  
 " others such like, have an equal right to a  
 " place in the Canon of Scripture; with  
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 " *Hermas*, the *Tract* of *Barnabas*, and  
 " others such like, have an equal right to a  
 " place in the Canon of Scripture; with  
 " the Gospels of *Mark* and *Luke*. The Au-

“thority and Credit of both, and of all the  
“other Canonical and Extra-canonical Writ-  
“ings, depending, on the Quotations made  
“from them, by St. *Ireneus*, *Clemens Alexan-*  
“*drinus*, *Origen*, and one or two more of  
“the Antients: and on their having been  
“Contemporaries and Coadjutors to the  
“Apostles. And so in few words, Friends,  
*bonas noctes* to the Christian Religion. Our  
Author however, that we may not forget  
to do him that right, is a compleat Gentle-  
man: tho he has us, and our Canon, at  
these Advantages; he saith, *He will deter-*  
*mine nothing, but suspend his Judgment.* P.  
58.

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On the CATALOGUE  
in general.

THE Catalogue, by *Amyntor*, is considerable on divers accounts :

*As it is pretty Perfect.* He has omitted but few, of those Antient Pieces; and not so often mistaken, as some others, the several and like Titles of the same Book, for several and distinct Books.

And, *as it naturally gives one, a great Idea of the Christian Religion.* By informing us of so many Persons that wrote Gospels, Acts, Revelations, Liturgies, Itineraries, Martyrdoms; either on their own knowledg, or on credible report made to them: and which have not been lost on any other accounts, but such as are common to things *Valuable*, and *Great* in their kind. Such as, the Deluge of (an immense) time, almost 1700 years; the absolute *Certainty*, and apparent *Sufficiency*, of the Gospels, Acts, Epistles, &c. which (on those accounts) the Church has preserved, and contents herself with them.

And lastly, *As nothing can be objected to it, or inferred from it; but what in such a case a*

man (of any Experience or Prudence) would certainly expect. Namely that, in so important and various a Subject, there would be some more Writers and Writings; than the extreme Caution of the Catholic Church, would intirely approve: and even that some Triflers, and Impostors, would intermix and intrude themselves, among the approved and well-meaning. It will be requisite, to enlarge a little, on these general Reflections.

That, *the Catalogue is indifferent perfect*, I grant. However, some Books (and other Writings) are omitted; and others, never really extant, or pretended to be extant, are added. For instance; under the *first Head*, or of Books ascribed to our Saviour, or that particularly concern him; these are overlookt.

A Book by St. Matthew, distinct from that by Thomas, concerning the Infancy of our Saviour; being the History of his younger Years. 'Tis very antient; for it hath some Passages, that are also mentioned by St. Irenæus: and which, he saith, were in the Books shown by the *Valentinians*.

A Letter of our Saviour; that fell down from Heaven: it being indeed an Epistle, forged by a certain notable Enthusiast, a *French Bishop*; who for this, and some other such-like Facts, was deprived and put to penance,  
by

by a Council assembled at *Rome*, An. 745. The Letter however was kept in the Library of the *Roman Church*, by order of Pope *Zechary*.

A Liturgy of our Saviour; received as his, by the *Ethiopians*: it was brought out of the Orient, by Father *J. Vansleb*; who promises also to publish it at *Paris*, together with other rare *Ethiopic* Pieces. But *Ludolphus*, in his *Ethiopic History and Commentary*, gives the true account of this Liturgy.

As to *Books added*, under the same Head; *Amyntor* mistakes when, as from *Eusebius*, he attributes to our Saviour a *Book of Parables and Sermons*. For, on the contrary, these *Proverbs and Doctrines* (as *Eusebius* calls them) were all of them only *Traditional*: they were *Doctrines and Proverbs* that *Papias* (Bishop of *Hierapolis*) had heard from some Persons, that they were spoke and taught by *Jesus Christ*; but they never were committed to writing, as a particular Book, by any body. The *Millennium*, or thousand-years Reign, was one of these *Traditional Doctrines*.

I observe also that, *Amyntor* very often confirms the Books of his Catalogue, by witness of Authors who never mention any such Book or Books; but only are thought by some, and that not very probably, to

allude to them, or to have made use of them. When he gives us that non-such History of the Scripture-Canon, I hope, he will oftner *himself consult the Authors he cites*; and less trust to the References of others: else it will be far from meriting the praises, he has before-hand given to it.

I incline to think, the Books wrote by the Apostles, their Contemporaries, and Synergists, are vastly more than *Amyntor*, or any other *now*, can give us the Titles, or other Traces of them: St. *Ireneus* calls them, Lib. 1. c. 17. *In-enarrabilem multitudinem Apocryphorum*; an innumerable multitude of Apocryphal Books. For we are not to consider all Authors and Books as Apocryphal; that are censur'd, under those names, by *Ireneus*: I am of opinion, we may apply to St. *Ireneus*; arguing against the *Gnostics*, *Valentinians*, and other Antient Sects and Books, that platonized too much; what, C. *Rhodiginus* (*Lect. Antiq. §. 1. c. 12.*) says of *Lactantius*, and the Platonists. *Ea, quæ obvelatis traduntur figuris, a Platoniciis; nec nisi Allegoricis enarrationibus intelligenda: iste ut simpliciter dicta accepit. Oblitus, nunquam futurum Platicum, qui non putet Platonem allegoricè intelligendum.* "What the  
" Platonists have delivered in dark, and  
" figurative expressions; and must not be  
" interpreted, but only in the Allegorical  
" way:



“ way : that, he has understood, as spoken  
 “ *directly*, and absolutely ; forgetting, or  
 “ not knowing that, a man shall never be a  
 “ Platonist, who imagines *Plato* is to be  
 “ taken, not allegorically, but literally.

But this great number of Acts, Gospels, Itineraries, Revelations, &c. as I said, be sure *they give Authority, and Lustre, to the Christian Religion.* As we came hereby to understand, it was an extraordinary Figure that Christianity made in the World, at its very first appearance. It should seem, men thought, they had never wrote enough concerning it : its admirable Morals, the Miracles of its Author and other first Preachers of it, its Revelations and Prophecies, verified by almost an immediate completion, did so convince and affect 'em ; that they even filled the world with their accounts of these things, under the names of *Acts, Revelations, Itineraries, Epistles, Gospels, Martyrdoms, Liturgies, Precepts, Recognitions, Institutions, Oracles*, and some more. 'Tis of some of these, that St. *Luke* speaks in the first Verses of his Gospel. He meant not the Gospel of *John* ; for 'tis agreed on all hands, *John* wrote his Gospel long after the other Evangelists, and to supply some of their Omissions. That he did not intend, only *Matthew* and *Mark* ; who indeed wrote before him ; may be inferred from  
 his

his own words, when he says. "Not, *τινές*;  
 " *some*, one or two; but *πολλοί*, MANY  
 " have taken in hand to set forth a Decla-  
 " ration of those things, that are most sure-  
 " ly believed among us; even as they de-  
 " livered them unto us, who *from the be-*  
 " *ginning were Eye-witnesses*, and Ministers  
 " of the WORD.

*Amyntor* and *M. Dodwel* believe *St. Luke*  
 doth not speak of the Gospels of *John*,  
*Matthew* and *Mark*; they suppose, he had  
 not so much as seen any of those Gospels.  
 But what is in their mind, to tell us that;  
 " *Luke* plainly intimates, the Authors of  
 " the Gospels which he had seen, had con-  
 " sulted neither any Persons that had been  
 " *Eye-witnesses*; nor so much as those who  
 " had seen or spoke with any such: and  
 " that on these Accounts, the Credit of  
 " those Gospels, is suspected and dubious.  
 For *St. Luke*, as before quoted, expressly  
 says; the Authors by him intended, had  
 wrote concerning our Saviour, his Miracles  
 and Doctrine, just in the manner *as they*  
*deliver'd them to us, who from the beginning*  
*were Eye-witnesses*. He could not possibly  
 have given a more ample Testimony, either  
 to their Fidelity, or their Accuracy.

In accounting for the Reasons, why these  
 Books are lost; too many People have learn-  
 ed to speak with intolerable Effrontry, and  
 Pro-

Profanity. I will first give the true Reasons, of so great a loss; and then examine the scurrilous Conjectures of some, who glory in their shame.

In general; "I could never wonder, "we have lost so many of the Apostolic Writings, and other Antient (important) Monuments of the Christian Religion; since I took notice, we have lost also the very best Books of the Antients, in all parts of Learning and Science.

In Philosophy; to the times of our Saviour, we have almost nothing left to us, but the Works of *Plato* and *Aristotle*: the least valuable, it may be, of all the Antients. The Philosophy of *Aristotle* being little else, but some dry Definitions; that give no light to the Natures of things: and that of *Plato*, such a futility in Philosophy, as *Behmenism* in Religion and Christianity; even a Rapsody of some Mystical (or Nonsensical) Terms, sprinkled here and there with a bright Thought, or lively Expression.

Of all the Philosophical Writers; since our Saviour, there remain (in my present remembrance) only two or three *Platonists* and *Stoics*, that were *Greeks*: by the *Latins*, there are only (I think) some Natural Questions by *Seneca*; and a few moral Pieces by the same *Seneca*, and by *M. Cicero*. Philosophy was cultivated, above 700 years,  
in

in *ASIA*; as also in *Egypt, Greece, Italy*, and most other Provinces of *EUROPE*; in *AFRICA*, from *Cyrene* to the Pillars of *Hercules* and the Ocean, being one of the longest tracts of Ground in the World. It grew into such reputation, that there were very many Academies; and an incredible number of Professors and Teachers, divers of them in high esteem. But few Persons of the better sort, that did not cause their Children to be educated, in some of these Academies: even the principal Nobility, whether *Greeks* or *Latins*, after having bore the Chief Offices of the Commonwealth, did not disdain to learn Philosophy in their years, if they had missed it in their youth; nay a Nobleman was not esteemed, if he were not a competent Orator and Philosopher. We may be assured therefore, we have lost a prodigious multitude of Philosophical Books, in the several parts of Philosophy; wrote by the most Eminent Masters, among the several Sects: undoubtedly it was then, as now, a customary thing; that, famous Professors wrote something, more or less, either led by their own Inclination, or by occasion of some Provocation, or perswaded by their Scholars and Admirers. Who (as I said but now) were all the Nobility; and all Persons of Distinction, whether for Wealth or Wit.

The

The like may be said of Authors, and Books, concerning Astronomy, Astrology, Divination, Magic, Geometry, Mechanics, Medicine, Anatomy, Botany, Poetry, Painting, Architecture, Statuary, the Origin and Rites of the Pagan Religions; History, both Natural and Civil. *Amyntor* himself somewhere puts us in mind, what is the Damage in the Historical part of Learning, "The loss, *says he*, of so many Decads of "the Roman Historiographer, *T. Livius*, is "alone as much to be regretted; *as if all* "the *Fathers* had miscarried. 'Tis easy to guess the Reason; He was a Heathen, and they were Christians. But we see however, by all this; that, the mere force, or edacity of time, bears away, or devours the most excellent Instances of Human Industry, and Wit: that we ought not to marvel, if we have not still *all*, or even had not the principal Labors, of the Apostles, and Apostolical men. If *Amyntor's* Catalogue of Books, some of them once revered by the Church, and now lost, were much larger than it is: it would by no means prove, they were all Trivial, Spurious, or Erroneous Books; 'twould be no imputation on Christianity, as abounding only with Fables and Impostures. There being, we have seen, no part of Learning (tho never so useful and necessary, or so curious and diverting;) but has

has suffered extremely, by the loss of some excellent Books and Authors, nay of most such Authors and Books.

I believe also, " The unquestionable *Orthodoxy*; the yielded certainty, or *genuineness*; and apparent *sufficiency*, of the present Scripture-Canon, were great Occasions that the Books in the Catalogue; fell (gradually) into dis-use, and were afterwards lost.

As to the *sufficiency* of the Books of the Canon; I mean, of all them taken together; it is self-evident. For they contain, a (repeated) Abrogation of the *Mosaic Law*, so far as 'tis Ritual and Judicial; a compleat System, of *Morals*; the History of the Parentage, Conception, Birth, Miracles, Doctrine, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of our Saviour: the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles, their Divine Inspiration, and Miraculous Powers; their Epistles, to private Persons, to Churches, and Nations; in which they often (professedly) repeat the Substance of the Christian Religion, as well in what respects *Faith* as *Manners*. In short, a man cannot read these Books, without most plainly perceiving, that; they are such an Account of the Religion they teach, as needs no Supplement.

Their

Their *Genuineness*, and *Orthodoxy*; or that they are the very Books of the Authors whose names they bear, and are true Representations of the Doctrines of Christianity *as delivered to the Churches* by the first (Miraculous) Preachers: this is inferred, with absolute certainty, *from their reception by all those Churches, as such*; and that *these*, rather than the Books of the Catalogue (tho divers of *them* also were highly valued) have been preserved.

If it be urged, that; supposing, as this Answer does, the Books in the Catalogue (most of them, or *some* of them) were *Orthodox*, and *Genuine*, and owned to be such by the Churches: 'tis much, they should be lost; and only the Books of the present Canon preserved. Which have been preserved, it seems, for no *other* Reasons; but what are common also to the Books of the Catalogue: name'y, because they are (undoubtedly) *Orthodox*, and (certainly) *Genuine*.

I answer, that; the Books of the Catalogue that are lost, or rejected, were not so certainly *Genuine*, to *all* the Churches; as these that are preserved, and made parts of the Canon. And as to the *Orthodoxy*, tho that (as to many of them) was not questioned; yet the Books not being so certain as to their *Genuineness* in all parts of  
the

the Christian World, and therefore not allowed as (unexceptionable) Evidences in the numerous Controversies that arose in the Catholic Church; and the un-suspected Books being abundantly sufficient to serve the ends of Religion, in respect both of Controversy, and Institution in manners: the former (hereupon) almost unavoidably began to be neglected, and in time were lost; and only the latter were kept.

We have now the advantages of Printing, and of a ready Communication (by the increase of Trade, and Improvement of Navigation) between Nation and Nation: the Antients wanted these helps; therefore with them, a Book concerning the Christian Religion, if it were not published in *Judea*, or at *Rome*, or in some part of *Greece*, or some considerable City of *Asia*, it might not come to be known of a long time; not vulgarly and generally known in the Churches, till the Evidences that it was Genuine were all wholly lost, or become of but little Authority. The Books of our present Canon, were immediately communicated by the Churches, or Persons, to whom they were written; unto all the Famous Churches. Like Industry was not used, on behalf of the Books of the Catalogue; therefore these last were read only, or chiefly, in the places of their Publication,  
and



and in the Churches to which they were addressed: and thus being long unknown to the Churches, and Illustrious Writers, of other places; tho many of them were approved as to their Doctrine and Usefulness, on which accounts they are often quoted by (those two, the most Learned of the *Antenicen* Fathers) *Clemens* of *Alexandria* and *Origen*, yet they did not obtain to be adopted into the Scripture Canon; as not so certainly the Works of Apostles and Apostolical men, as those that were received for such *every where*, and *from the beginning*.

Farther, it may be divers Books of the Catalogue, titled with the name of an Apostle, or Synergist of the Apostles, "were rejected (and in process of time, lost;) " for that very reason. It was supposed that, the Book having to it a name of one of the Apostles, or some Apostolical Person; therefore the Author claims to be that Person, or that Apostle: it might appear however, by some things in the Book it self, or by some Circumstances commonly known, that the Author was not the Apostle, or other Person vulgarly thought to be designed in the Title; and hereupon the Book was consider'd as a Forgery and Imposture, and as wrote (probably) with some dishonest Intention and Aim. But as *now*, so *then*; and

*then* much more than *now*; abundance of People had the *same names* with the Apostles, and other first Preachers: it may be, most Christians took those Names, either at their Conversion, or Baptism. A Book therefore, (suppose a Gospel, Epistles, Acts,) might really be the Work of the Author in the Title-page, or elsewhere in the Book; and yet in short time be rejected, neglected, and finally lost, as an Imposture and Forgery, on *that false supposition*, that the Author affected to seem the Person that he was not, and that (in truth) he never pretended to be. This very thing hath certainly hapned, in divers Works of the Fathers; as well those of the fourth and fifth Ages, and later, as those of the second and third: and it might happen, I say, in divers Writings of the Catalogue that we are considering.

I take these to be some of the Causes, that so many Books of the Catalogue are lost: Time; the Sufficiency of the Books preserved; and *that*, some of them came not to general knowledg, till the Evidences that they were Genuine, were not so certain. These are such Reasons, and Occasions of it, that we cannot much wonder at the misfortune of this (invaluable) Damage. And after this, 'tis but little to the credit of their Judgment, and *less* of their  
Morals,

Morals, that some affect to guess at the Causes of this Mishap, in a sort that reflects on the Christian Religion; as if it had no manner of certainty, and that we cannot now (nor ever could) distinguish Fables and Impostures, from Authentic Monuments. If a man is disposed, to employ his Wit in scurrilous Conjectures: he may say many things on such a Subject as this, that shall be loudly applauded by the Partisans of Scepticism and Profanity; and that will surprise the Superficial, tho they be serious and well-disposed. But I maintain, that; after we have discovered such Reasons of the loss of these Books, as every body must allow that some of them are certain, and others of them are probable, and all of them consistent with the reverence due to Religion: those other (Sportive, or Malevolent) Conjectures will be insisted on, only by such as affect to be Infidels; or that love to be vain, tho in a serious and weighty Subject. And tho to convince such People, is (it may be) an impossible Task; it being so much in the power of the Mind, whether it will admit a light to which it has prejudices: yet it will not be hard, to satisfy the Indifferent, that; those Guesses are not the results of Judgment, but only of a sceptical, abusive, prejudicate, and interested Partiality and Vanity.

They tell us, these Books were not lost; *they were suppress'd*, because they contained some things, contrary to the Persuasions of the strongest side; which always calls it self the Church.

Or, they were *gross, and leud Forgeries*; compos'd by the Enemies of Christians: with design only to make sport with a Crew of Blockheads, that were always ready to swallow any thing; never so silly and ridiculous; provided it were but miraculous, and had a few good Morals.

Or, we owe them to a certain *pious fraud*, to which the Antients were much given; that sought to magnify Christianity, by these pompous Tales and Additions to it: the true Apostolic Writings being too imperfect, to raise in mens Minds any great apprehensions of the Christian Religion.

Yet lest we should not by all this fully understand them, they are mindful and *careful* to add, that; these Writings and Books however were quoted, and revered by many of the Antients or Fathers: and *that*,<sup>1</sup> no more than this can be said, on behalf of the Books (of our Canon) that are preserv'd; and not so much, for divers of them. Or more in short; the latter are not a rush better, or wiser, than the former: saving only that, *they have had the good luck to be preserv'd*, by Knaves; and *magnified*, by  
Fools.

*Fools.* Let us call over, and discuss these things.

The Books of the Catalogue were once in reputation, in some Places, and with divers Learned Persons; but they are now partly lost, partly very much suspected as not Genuin.

We answer; Seventeen hundred years, the undeniable sufficiency of the Books which are preserved, and *that* the Books of the Catalogue were not timely communicated to the principal Churches, are obvious and probable Reasons, that so many of 'em have miscarried, and the rest are of doubtful Credit. Some People are pleased to laugh at this; and choose rather to guess, that, the Books we talk of, have been either suppressed or slighted, because they were not *to the tooth of the strongest side*; or were the *Mock-compositions, of Enemies*; or the *Holy Cheats* of Persons that sought to aggrandize Christianity. That is, without ever having seen these Books; without having heard of most of them, under any other Character by the Antients, than that *they were known but to few*: they pronounce over them, indefinitely, or *without distinguishing them*; that, they were *lend Cheats, or pious Frauds*, or *told some dangerous Tales* that the political and prevailing Party thought fit to suppress.

Who sees not, these are Suppositions that a man may make at will, concerning any Books that are lost; or any such Books, that the Evidences of their being Genuin and sound, have miscarried? but they are *mere* Conjectures; and such as neither Charity, nor Prudence, suffers us to make, when we have others that are extremely *probable*, and some of them *certain*.

I gave some Instances before of Mathematical, Historical, and Philosophical Books; that are lost: there is no learned Man that would approve of such a Judgment as this, concerning them; they have perisht because *they were Trifles, or Impostures, or shot some such Bolts, as the generality of wiser men could not away with.* I leave the matter with the indifferent, to judg of it; as their Wit, and Honesty, shall dispose 'em.

I added, at our entrance into this Dissertation; "Nothing can be objected to the  
" Catalogue, but what one would look for:  
" *that*, in so various a Subject, some more  
" Books are written, than the *severe* scrutiny of the Catholic Church would (absolutely) approve; and *that*, some Triflers and Impostors would *perhaps* be exercising their shameful Talents, among  
" the honest and well-qualified. I meant hereby, if we grant that most or almost all

(or if you will, *all*) the Books of the Catalogue were Spurious; that they were pious Frauds, or impious Cheats, or have been suppress'd by the Jealousy of the prevailing side: it will not in the least affect the Scripture-Canon, or Christian Religion; which are not the less true, or less certain, because there have been some false Evangelists, and false Pretenders to Revelation. Infidelity and Profanity are hard put to it, when their whole strength is reduced to this: there have been some *false* Evangelists, *feigned* Acts, Epistles, Revelations; therefore we have no certainty of any true Gospels, Revelations, Epistles or Acts. As if they had said; *Lucius*, *Ambrose*, and *Arthur*, were *fabulous* Kings of *Britain*; and *Jeffry* of *Monmouth* has contrived a British Chronicle, consisting chiefly of Tales of his own devising: therefore neither can we prove *Cassibelan*, *Caractacus*, and *Arviragus*, were sometimes Kings in this Island. Or if you will, thus; *Isidore Mercator* published a Volume of *Spurious* Epistles of Popes and Bishops, and Decrees of Councils: *Annius* of *Viterbium* somewhile deceived every body, with a *Counterfeit Metasthenes*, a *Berosus*, *Manetho* and *Philo*. Therefore, we ought not to think, there were at all any such Councils, Bishops, and Popes; or a *real Metasthenes*, a *Berosus*, *Philo*, and *Minetho*,

who were Learned and celebrated Writers and Historians. Why don't they alledg the *Alchoran* too, as an Exception, and Objection to the Scripture Canon; and say, because one was an Imposture, so must the other?

Our Author seems to be aware, of some such Exceptions as these; and therefore makes short work with us, by intimating (in a great many places) that; "*The reasons are the same*, why we should reject, " or receive the Catalogue, and (present) " Scripture-Canon: as much may be said " *for*, or *against* one, as the other. We will examine this; and the Pretences, with which 'tis supported, very carefully.

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*Of*



*Of the Verity, and Certainty  
of the Scripture-Canon.*

I Shall reduce into the best Method, and most natural Order that I can, what is any way considerable in our Author's Book; concerning the Scripture-Canon: discussing every particular, as I recite or mention it.

From P. 69, to P. 79; he has a Quotation out of *M. Dodwel*, to this sense. " The  
" Books of the present Canon, lay conceal-  
" ed in the Coffers of particular Churches,  
" or of private Men; [ the Churches and  
" Men to whom they were written ] till  
" the latter times of *Trajan*, or rather of  
" *Adrian* : [ that is, till about 130 years  
" after Christ. ] We are not to think that;  
" the Writers of the New Testament, knew  
" any thing of the Gospels, or other Books  
" of the Canon, that were not wrote by  
" themselves; or *that*, the Clergy made  
" a Common use, either of the one or  
" other. We have still some Ecclesiastical  
" Writers, of those early times; *Clemens*  
" *Romanus*, *Barnabas*, *Hermas*, *Ignatius*,  
" and *Polycarp* : but in *Hermas*, there is not  
" one passage out of the New Testament;  
" in

“ in the rest, not any of the Evangelists is  
 “ called by his Name, or is particularly  
 “ named. Nor can we know, whether the  
 “ Passages they cite, are alledged out of  
 “ the Gospels or other Books of our present  
 “ Canon ; or from other Gospels and Books,  
 “ namely the Books of the Catalogue : for  
 “ the Citations are very different, from the  
 “ Words in our present Gospels and other  
 “ Canonical Books ; and for the most part  
 “ have something added to them.

*Amyntor* declares, he assents to all this ;  
 and farther to recommend it, he complements  
*M. Dodwel* after a very extraordinary manner.  
 He affirms, “ *M. Dodwel*, tho a Lay-  
 “ man, knows as much of these matters, as  
 “ the Divines of all Churches put together.  
 What an advantage is it sometimes to a man,  
 not to be a *thing in Holy Orders* ; how much  
 more knowing, and Learned shall he be,  
 than himself was aware : for I take it for  
 granted, this Bounce of a Complement was  
 wholly intended to *M. Dodwel's* Lay-quality.  
 I am content for my part, *M. Dodwel* be the  
 next *HERO*, to *M. Milton* ; I hope how-  
 ever 'twill be granted, that how much soever  
*M. Dodwel* knows, *he does not know that to*  
*be true, which is false* ; and in confidence  
 of this, I intend to discuss, what he hath  
 said. Or rather, to speak with due reserve  
 of a Person and Matter that I my self do  
 not

not know, what *Amyntor* hath imputed to him.

He says, " The Writers of the New Testament were unknown to one another; " and to the Churches, and Clergy; till " 130 years after Christ. How do I fear, lest he that is said to know as much of these Matters, as the Clergy of all Churches put together, should be found to know less of 'em; than any of us Country-Curats? For first, as to the Writers of the four *Gospels*; all the Church-Historians agree, St. *Matthew* wrote first, so it will not be expected we should prove, that he had seen the rest: but 'tis apparent, the next Evangelist, *Mark*, had seen and read the Gospel by St. *Matthew*; because *Mark's* Gospel is indeed nothing else but an abridgment of St. *Matthew's*, as the Critics and Interpreters have (many of them) observed. They are the words of *H. Grotius*, on *Mark* 1. 1. *Usum esse Marcum Matthæi Evangelio, apertum facit collatio: i. e.* If we compare their Gospels, it will be evident that St. *Mark* made great use of the Gospel by *Matthew*. St. *Austin*, de *Conf. Eccl.* c. 2. says: *Marcus Mattheum subsequutus; tanquam pedisequus, & brevior ejus videtur.* i. e. As St. *Mark* wrote in time after St. *Matthew*; so he follows him as it were at the very heels, in respect of the things related, only abridging what St. *Matthew* had more largely said. After

After *Matthew* and *Mark*, came *St. Luke*; he is very reasonably and probably thought to intend (besides we know not who else) *Matthew* and *Mark*; in those first words of his Gospel. "For as much as MANY  
 " have taken in hand, to set forth in order  
 " a Declaration of those things, which are  
 " surely believed among us; even as they  
 " delivered them to us, who *from the be-*  
 " *ginning* were *Eye-witnesses*, and *Ministers*  
 " of the Word: it seemed good to me al-  
 " so, &c. Those Characters of *Eye-wit-*  
*nesses*, and *from the beginning*, and *Mini-*  
*sters of the Word*, agree to the Person of *St. Matthew*; and the two last to *St. Mark*: that to say the whole Period was intended of *them*, at least *with others*, is what has been reasonably believed hitherto; and is not made less reasonable by the two Exceptions by *Amyntor*, taken (as he saith) out of *M. Dodwel*. They alledg, that; *St. Luke* has given a *different Genealogy* of our Saviour, from that by *St. Matthew*, without giving any reason for it: and that, there are many *apparent Contradictions*, between these (and other) Writers of Scripture. But if these Gentlemen please to look into *Matth. i. 6.* and *Luke 3. 31.* they will see a *reason* of the difference of the *Genealogies*: namely that, *St. Matthew* deduces the *Genealogy* from *Solomon*, *St. Luke* from *Nathan*; both of them  
 Sons

Sons of *David*, and Ancestors to our Saviour, *in the sense that David was his Ancestor.* As for the apparent Contradictions, between these Evangelists; if it were true, it would rather prove that *St. Luke* had seen and read those other two Evangelists: because by writing any thing contrary to them, he intended without doubt to correct their Mistake; and rightly inform their common Readers. But 'tis certain he was not in the least aware, that those former Evangelists needed any correction; for himself, we have seen before, bears 'em witness, that they had written all things *as those Persons have also deliver'd them to us, who from the beginning were Eye-witnesses, and Ministers of the WORD:* that is, as the other Apostles, and first Preachers, have also deliver'd them, by word of mouth.

The last Evangelist was *St. John*; how he came to be an Evangelist, or on what occasion he wrote, *Eusebius* (the first and learnedest Historian of the Church) will tell us, in these words: "The Gospels of *Matthew*,  
" *Mark*, and *Luke*, being in all mens hands,  
" came also to the knowledge of the Apostle  
" *John*; who approved them, as faithfully  
" written. But he observed, they were deficient in this respect, that; they had omitted that part of our Saviour's Actions  
" and Preaching, which preceded the Im-  
" prison-

“ prisonment of *John the Baptist*: for they  
 “ all begin their Narratives, with the Im-  
 “ prisonment of *John*. — Hereupon, St.  
 “ *John* being thereto requested, added (in  
 “ a Gospel by him) the Time and Transacti-  
 “ ons that had been omitted by the other E-  
 “ vangeliſts. *Euseb. H. E. l. 3. c. 24.*

The Epistles of St. *Paul* are another consi-  
 derable part of the Canon of the New Tes-  
 tament; our Opposers say, “ They lay hid  
 “ in the coffers of the Churches and Persons  
 “ to whom they were written, till 130  
 “ years after Christ. I ask, How then came  
 St. *Peter* to say, 2 *Pet. 3. 15.* “ As our  
 “ beloved Brother *Paul*, according to the  
 “ Wisdom given to him, hath written to  
 “ you; *as also in all his Epistles*, speaking  
 “ (to them) of these things: in which (E-  
 “ pistles) are some things, hard to be un-  
 “ derstood; which they that are unlearn-  
 “ ed and unstable do wrest (as they do  
 “ also the other Scriptures) to their own  
 “ Damnation. This Testimony proves, not  
 only that St. *Peter* had seen the Epistles of  
*Paul*; but that *they were commonly read*,  
 and a very bad Use made of 'em by  
 some.

The remaining part of the Canon, even the  
 Catholic or General Epistles, by St. *James*,  
 St. *Peter*, St. *John*, St. *Jude*; and the *Revela-*  
*tion*: because they were written some of  
 them

them to *whole Nations*, and the rest to *all Christians*, not to particular Persons or Churches; we must needs understand they *were published*, by those Apostles themselves. They could be no otherwise written and addressed to Nations, and to *all Christians*; but by such a general Publication, as when we now give a Copy of a Letter or Book, to a Bookseller, to be by him made common.

It appears (I suppose) by all this, to indifferent Persons, that; 'tis utterly untrue, that the Writers of the *New Testament* were strangers to the Writings of one another; is it any better, what follows next? namely that:

“ Neither did the Clergy, or Churches,  
 “ know of the Gospels; and other Books,  
 “ of our present Canon. We have still,  
 “ *say these Gentlemen*, some Ecclesiastical  
 “ Writers of those early times; *Clemens*  
 “ *Romanus*, *Barnabas*, *Hermas*, *Ignatius*, and  
 “ *Polycarp*. Of these, *Hermas* has not one  
 “ passage out of all the *New Testament*:  
 “ and for the places that are cited by the  
 “ rest, *one cannot tell* whether they are taken  
 “ out of the Books of the present Canon;  
 “ or out of the Spurious Books, [even  
 “ those of the Catalogue, or some such.]

*Hermas* has not one passage out of the *New Testament*. Therefore, what? Why, therefore

therefore as we were saying, and are now proving; *Hermas* had not read the Books of the New Testament, which were all still (and long after, even to the year 130) in the Coffers of Persons and Churches to whom they were written. And I say, *Hermas* has not cited a word out of the whole Old Testament. Had he not therefore read any of the Books, of that Testament? had not a professing Christian, and a Writer (think they) read any Book of the Old or New Testament? It is apparent, he had read both: by the Doctrine of his Book; by his Discourses on Baptism, Repentance, and all Christian Virtues; by his Visions, Similitudes, and Commands, of all which he had his Hints from the Books of Holy Scripture, especially the Prophetical. He even sometimes expresses himself in the very words of the New Testament; as when he says, *Com. 4. Sect. 1. He that putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth Adultery.* Which he took, no doubt, from *St. Luke*; who uses those very words, *Luke 16. 18.*

*Clemens Romanus* manifestly alludes, to divers Expressions and Passages of the New Testament; and some he expressly repeats, as *Charity covereth a multitude of Sins*; *1 Pet. 4. 8. We are Members one of another, Rom. 12. 5. He (Christ) is so much greater than Angels*;



Angels; as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent Name, than they. Heb. 1. 2, 4. Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven; — with what measure ye meet, it shall be measured to you again. Luke 6. 37. Wo unto him by whom Offences come: It were better for him, that a Millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were cast into the Sea; than that he should offend one of my little ones. Luke 17. 1, 2.

St. Polycarp takes notice, of the Epistle written by St. Paul, to the Philippians; and saith, that Apostle mentions the Philippians with much Honor, in the beginning of his Epistle to them. So indeed he dos; calling them, the Saints at Philippi; and professing that, upon every remembrance of them, he giveth thanks to God. Phil. 1. 1, 2. He cites also the words of St. Paul to other Churches; as, Do ye not know that the Saints shall judg the World? 1 Cor. 6. 2. Neither Fornicators, nor Effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, shall inherit the Kingdom of God. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. We brought nothing into this World, and we can carry nothing out of it. 1 Tim. 6. 7. He often repeats the Words and Expressions of St. Peter: Whom not having seen, ye love; in whom, tho now ye see him not, ye rejoyce, with joy unspeakable and full of Glory. 1 Pet. 1. 8. Who his own self bare our Sins, in his own Body, on the

*Tree: — who did no Sin; nor was Guile found in his Mouth. 1 Pet. 2. 22, 24. Having your Conversation, honest among the Gentiles. Out of St. John, he hath; Whosoever doth not confess, that; Jesus Christ is come in the Flesh; this is Anti-Christ. 1 John. 4. 3. From the Evangelists Matthew and Luke, he gives us these Passages. Blessed are they, that are persecuted for Righteousness sake; for theirs is the Kingdom of God. Matth. 5. 10. Blessed are the Poor, for theirs is the Kingdom of God. Luke 6. 10. The Spirit truly is willing, but the Flesh is weak. Matth. 26.*

41.

*Clemens and Polycarp affect to speak, whatsoever they have to say, in the words of Scripture; especially of the New Testament: St. Ignatius rather uses his own way of Expression, but he saith from St. Matthew; He that is able to receive this, let him receive it. Matth. 19. 12. The Tree is known, by his Fruit. Matth. 12. 33. From St. Paul he borrows, who hath given himself for us, an Offering and Sacrifice, to God. Eph. 5. 2. Be perfectly joined together, in the same mind, and in the same judgment; and all speak the same things. 1 Cor. 1. 10. Where is the Wise, where is the Disputer? 1 Cor. 1. 23.*

They have but one Witness more, to call, St. Barnabas; who also is against them; not much less than the former: for he alledges  
from

from St. *Matthew*, *Many are called, but few are chosen*. Matth. 20. 16. and 22. 14. He came not to call the *Righteous*, but *Sinners* to repentance. Matth. 9. 13. In his 19th Section, he giveth an Abstract or Summary of the Moral and Practical Duties of Christianity, or the *way of Life* as he speaks: it appears, both by the matter and manner of speaking, He meant to abridg the morality, of the *Old, and New Testaments*.

If we now consider that, these Pieces are only Epistles, or Letters; and some of them so brief, that they may be written on a sheet of Paper: we may rather wonder, that these Fathers have quoted so much Scripture; than that we meet so little in their Letters. And when *M. Dodwel* and *Amyntor* say, *They cannot tell, whether these Citations are from the Books of our Canon, or from some of the Apocryphal Books of the Catalogue*; they put me hard to it, to imagine what they can tell: for they are the very words, neither more nor fewer, of the Canonical Books; and are extant in no other Writers, that I, or that they know; unless they should be in the invaluable (lost) Decads of *Titus Livius*.

As to other Quotations out of these Fathers, that might also have been observed; in which, in repeating the words of Scripture, they sometimes substitute an equivalent

word (or words) for the word in the Scripture-Text: it was not, because they were quoting some Apocryphal Gospel, Epistle, or Acts; but because *they cited by memory*. Wanting Concordances, and our other Modern Helps; they could not, without much trouble to themselves, be always exact in repeating Scripture-Texts as to the *words*, tho they keep well enough to the *sense*. And for this reason also, they do not always name the Scripture-Author whom they alledg; even to avoid the (possible) Mistake of one Writer for another.

I make but this one remark more, on the Citations of Scripture, by these Fathers. It is reckned, they all wrote before the whole Canon of the New Testament was compleated; *M. Dodwel* says expressly, before *Jude* or the two *Johns* had written. And they wrote from places, very distant from *Judea*, and from one another; *Hermas* and *Clemens* from *Rome*, *Barnabas* from *Cyprus*; *Polycarp* from *Smyrna* in *Asia*, *Ignatius* from *Syria*. This serves to assure us that, the Gospels and Apostolic Writings were immediately communicated; either by particular care of the Churches, or (more probably) by a publication; to the *most remote* Bishops and Churches: that there can be nothing more contrary to Truth, and to the Zeal and Diligence of the first Christians

and

and Churches, than this Affirmation of *M. Dodwel*, and his Second; that the Apostolic Writings were lockt up in Coffers, of the Churches and Persons to whom they were written, till 130 years after Christ. Which is so far, we have seen, from being true; that all the Writers of those times, tho living in places *some Thousands of miles distant from one another, and from Judea*, adorn even their familiar Letters, with Flowers from the four Gospels, and Epistles of the present Canon: nor do they cite, that we know of, a single Sentence from the Books of the Catalogue.

*Amyntor* however, tho he assents to *M. Dodwel*, in saying that, our present Scripture-Canon, and the Books that compose it, were unknown to the Churches and Clergy, till 130 years after Christ: yet he doth not think, *Barnabas, Hermas, Clemens, Polycarp, or Ignatius*, were the real Authors of those Epistles that go under their Names; but that these Epistles were forged about such time, as so many other Impostures appeared in the Catholic Church, namely a good while after the year 130. But hereby, he hath entirely given up the Cause he was maintaining. *M. Dodwel* speaks consistently to himself, tho not truly; when he says, the Scripture-Canon was not known to the Churches or Clergy till about the

year 130, because *Clemens* (and the other Writers of those times) cite nothing out of the said Canon. But *Amyntor* forgets to be consistent to his Cause, when he says, the Canonical Books were not known till the year 130; and at the same time denies, we have any Monuments left of those antient times, *Clemens* and the rest being of much later date, and also Impostures.

Besides, granting to him, that these Epistles are Impostures; devised more than 130 years after Christ, as 150 or 180 after our Saviour: yet having quoted abundance of Paragraphs out of our present Canon, and none out of the Books of the Catalogue; as we are hereby assured, that the former were then known, and approved as Books of received and allowed Authority, so “ the other either  
“ were not known, or not consider’d as  
“ Books whose Authority could oblige, or so  
“ much as persuade.

There were divers other Writers of those early times, besides *Clemens* and the rest mentioned by *M. Dodwel*; and tho their Works are lost, yet we have certain assurance that they quoted the Books of the New Testament. *Papias*, Bishop of *Hierapolis*, was Scholar of St. *John*, and Companion of *Polycarp*; *Eusebins* had read his Works, and takes (occasional) notice that he quotes the Epistles of St. *John*, and  
St.

St. Peter. *Euseb. H. E. l. 3. Cap. ult.*

Contemporaries to *Papias* and *Polycarp*, and much within the term of 130 after Christ, was *Quadratus*, *Agrippa* surnamed *Castor*, and *Basilides*. Of these, *Basilides* wrote 24 Books of Commentaries (or Explanations) on the Gospels. Concerning the other two, *Eusebius* saith, " They, with  
" *many more*, made it their business, to  
" preach in places, where as yet Churches  
" were not gathered; and (τῶν θεῶν εὐαγγέ-  
" λίων παραδιδόναι γεγραμμένην) to bestow and dis-  
" perse Copies of the Inspired Gospels. *H. E.*  
*Lib. 3. c. 37. Lib. 4. c. 7.*

*Justin Martyr* in his Second Apology, but 140 years after Christ, (as *Dr. Cave* hath proved;) makes us to know that, there was then a particular Officer in the Churches, called the *Reader*, distinct from the Preacher; whose business it was, saith he, to read the *Prophetical and Apostolical Books* to the Congregation, until it is sufficient. *Amyntor* must suppose with great liberty, if he supposes, that in the year 130 the Books of the New Testament were unknown to the Churches and Clergy; and that, but ten years after, they were so known, and in such credit, that the Churches entertained an Officer on purpose to read them, in their Assemblies.

But why do we protract a Dispute ; and seek to old Authors known to few People, to determine it ; when it may be ended by one (demonstrative) Argument, and of which all Persons are capable ? “ The four  
“ Gospels, Acts, general Epistles, and Revelation, were not written to particular  
“ Persons, or particular Churches ; but  
“ written, and published to all the World.  
“ Let me hear *Amyntor*, or *M. Dodwel*, say ;  
“ they were not written to be published, or  
“ were not published so soon as written :  
“ if they dare not say so ; why do they  
“ say, they were kept in private Coffers,  
“ till 130 years after Christ ? I don’t think,  
“ any body will believe ; that, the Churches or Clergy were ignorant of the published  
“ Books of their Religion.

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## A Continuation of the Defence of the Canon.

ANOTHER Detraction of our Author, from the Credibility and just Authority of the Canon, is that; “ The principal Fathers of the three first Ages, *Irenæus, Clemens Alexandrinus, and Origen,* did quote divers Books of the Catalogue (particularly *Barnabas, Hermas, Ignatius, Polycarp, and Clemens Romanus,*) as *Scripture*. And why should not all the Books that are cited by these Learned Fathers, as *Scripture*, be accounted equally Authentic and Canonical? Or if these Disciples and Successors of the Apostles, could so grossly confound the genuine Writings of the Evangelists and Apostles, with such as are spurious and falsely attributed to them; how came others [the following Fathers, and the Councils, who have undertaken to declare which Books are Canonical, and which not,] to be better or more certainly informed? In short, he saith; *Clemens Romanus, Barnabas, Ignatius, Hermas, and Polycarp,* were esteemed by the Antients to be as good as any part of the New Testament: and seeing herein they were  
“ so

“ so grossly mistaken ; what stress can be  
 “ laid on their Testimony, concerning the  
 “ Books of the New Testament itself? which  
 “ Testimony however, both formerly and  
 “ at present, is alledged as the *principal rea-*  
 “ *son* (sometimes he maketh it to be the  
 “ *only reason*,) why the Books of the New  
 “ Testament are received as Canonical. *Amynt.*  
 “ p. 44, 45, 46, 52, 79, 80. He adds, at p.  
 “ 57, 58. The Council of *Laodicea*, *An.*  
 “ 360 after Christ, is *the first Assembly*  
 “ wherein the Canon of Scripture was de-  
 “ termined. In so great a variety of Books  
 “ (those of the Catalogue, *he means*, and  
 “ those of the Canon;) how could that  
 “ Council determine, which were the true  
 “ Writings of the Apostles, and which not;  
 “ but *by Revelation*, or the written *Testimo-*  
 “ *ny of their Predecessors*? Revelation in the  
 “ case there was none: and for Testimony,  
 “ I have the same Testimony for the Books  
 “ I defend, which is usually urged in behalf  
 “ of *the Canon*.

We may abridg, and distinguish this Judgment, into these Propositions.

1. The *best* of the Antients esteemed the  
 Writings that now go under the names of  
*Clemens Romanus*, *Hermas*, *Barnabas*, *Ig-*  
*natius*, and *Polycarp*, to be as good Scrip-  
 ture; as any part of the New Testament  
 was then, or is now, accounted.

2. The

2. The true Canon can be ascertained, only by Revelation, or the Testimony of the Fathers: Revelation there was none; and the Testimony of the Fathers is as home and full for *Clemens*, *Ignatius*, and the rest, not to mention many other Books of the Catalogue, as for our Canonical Books.

3. 'Tis even certain that, the Fathers were mistaken in the Opinion they had concerning (the pretended) *Clemens*, *Hermas*, *Barnabas*, *Polycarp*, and *Ignatius*; therefore, neither is their Testimony valuable concerning the Books of the New Testament, or present Scripture Canon.

We shall answer sufficiently, if we prove clearly and indubitably these two things; *That* the Antients had not the same, or like regard for *Clemens Romanus*, *Barnabas*, or any other Books of the Catalogue, as for the Books of the Canon: and *that*, they had other (and stronger) reasons, besides the Testimony of their Predecessors, why they establish'd the present Canon; or in other words, why they received the Books of the Canon, and not those of the Catalogue.

When *Amyntor* says, the best of the Fathers and Antients quote the Writings of *Barnabas*, *Hermas*, *Clemens Romanus*, *Ignatius*, and *Polycarp*; as Canonical, and Scripture: and *that*, they esteemed them as  
good

*good as any part of the New Testament.* For this latter he will never be able to produce one Testimony of any of the Antients ; and I shall abundantly prove the contrary, from those Fathers to whom he appeals, and whose sense he hath so much mistaken : for the *other*, were it true, yet 'tis not to the purpose. For 'tis certain, and granted by all Learned Men, that ; those Fathers called all the Antient Ecclesiastical Books, if they were Orthodox, *Scripture*, and *Canonical* : the terms *Canonical*, and *Scripture* were not then appropriated, to *Books written by Inspiration* ; but were common to all *Ecclesiastical Writers and Books*, if Orthodox. \**Origen*, for instance, often cites the *Apocryphal Books* of the Old Testament, as *Scripture*, and *Canonical* ; in his Homilies, and sometimes when he is disputing : but when he discourses *professedly*, what Books are *Divine Scripture*, and what are not ; he admits only those Books of the Old Testament that are received by Protestants, rejecting the Apocryphal Books ; see concerning this *Enseb. H. E. l. 6. c. 25.*

*Clemens Romanus*, *Hermas*, and divers more, are cited *as Scripture* by the Antients and Fathers ; says *Amyntor*.

By which of 'em ? He answers ; by *Irenæus*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and *Origen* : and he refers us to places in their Writings. But  
in

in some of those places, nothing at all is said by those Fathers, concerning the Books of which we are inquiring ; in other places, the Authors are named, but nothing is quoted out of them : elsewhere are Citations out of them, but not under the names of Scripture or Canonical ; and where they are so called, 'tis only in the sense that the same (and many later) Fathers call the *Apocryphal Books of the Old Testament*, Canonical or Scripture, and yet deny them to be of *Divine Authority*, or to be received by the Churches as a *Rule of their Faith*. Yet more particularly,

It is not true that *Irenæus*, in the alledged place or elsewhere, calls the *Epistle of Clemens Romanus*, Scripture. He cites it, only to prove that, "*Apostolical Tradition*" is contrary to the Heresy which teaches, "*there is a God above the Creator of the World* : because, saith he, the said *Epistle of Clemens* to the *Corinthians*, which is older than that detestable and foolish Heresy, teaches but one God, *All-mighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth*. In the same Book and Chapter (l. 3. c. 3.) he commends the *Epistle of Polycarp*, but cites nothing out of, or calls it Scripture and Canonical. That, *Hermas* is mentioned by *Irenæus*, I don't remember : *Amyntor* refers to *Lib. 4. cap. 3.* but nothing is there said of him: As  
to

to Ignatius, Irenæus only calls him, *Quendam ex Nostreis adjudicatum ad Bestias propter Deum*, "One of us Christians condemned to the Beasts for the cause of God. He doth not so much as name him; but 'tis guessed he means Ignatius, because the words he quotes are found in an Epistle of Ignatius.

'Tis no wonder that, *Clemens Alexandrinus* may call the Epistle of *Barnabas* and the Pastor of *Hermas*, Scripture; in the sense before mentioned: as a term of distinction, or to distinguish them from the Writings of the *Gentile* Moralists and Philosophers, whom also he often cites, and explains their Opinions. *Eusebius* (H. E. l. 6. c. 13.) observes that, *Clemens* of *Alexandria* quotes the *Wisdom of Solomon*, and *Ecclesiasticus*, or the *Wisdom of Jesus Son of Syrac*; and with them, the Epistles of *Barnabas*, *Clemens Romanus*, and others not universally received among Christians. Now as the *Wisdom of Solomon* and *Ecclesiasticus* were never reckoned by the Catholic Church, and therefore (undoubtedly) neither by *Clemens*, as parts of the Old Testament, but only as laudable Appendices to it: so when we find him quoting also *Hermas*, *Barnabas*, or *Clemens Romanus*, under the same names and Epithets that he gives to *Ecclesiasticus* and (the false) *Solomon*; he intended no more

more thereby to make them parts of the New Testament, than he (or the Catholick Church) accounted the other to be parts of the Old Testament.

What I say, is yet more plain from *Origen*, the last of *Amyntor's* Fathers. All the Apocryphal Books of the Old Testament, are frequently alledged by *Origen*; in company with his Citations out of the genuine Books of the New and Old Testaments: he has caused us however to know the vast difference, he put between them; and that the Catholick Church received only the present (Protestant) Canon, as *Divine Scripture*, the other Books (whether the Apocryphal Books of *the Old Testament*, or those of *the Catalogue*,) only as useful and commendable Writings. He tells us, as to the Canon of the New Testament; "There are only four Gospels: the first by *Matthew*, "written for the use of the Jews; the "next by *Mark*, who had his Information "by *St. Peter*; the Gospel by *Luke*, intended for the *Gentiles*; lastly, *John's* Gospel. "Concerning the Writings of *St. Paul*; he "mentions only his Epistles: they are short, "saith he, and not to all the Churches which "he had planted, or where he had taught. "Peter, so he goes on, wrote an Epistle "that is received and esteemed by all; we "may grant he wrote a second Epistle, but  
" it

" it is doubted of. *John* wrote a Gospel;  
 " and Revelation; a short Epistle: and  
 " if you will, a second, and third Epistle;  
 " but the two last are also questioned by  
 " some. He thinks those Churches are to  
 " be commended, that receive *the Epistle to*  
 " *the Hebrews*; for our Ancestors reckon it  
 " to *St. Paul*, and had doubtless good rea-  
 " sons why they did so. *Origen*, *Expos. in*  
*Joan.* l. 5. & *in Matth.* l. 1. *Euseb.* H. E.  
 l. 6. c. 25. We see then, in reckoning up  
 the genuin Works of the Apostles, and  
 Books that they thought to be *Divine Scrip-*  
*ture*, *Origen* does not vouchsafe so much as  
 to mention any of the Books of the Ca-  
 talogue: he knows nothing of other Go-  
 spels, Acts, Revelations, or Epistles, besides  
 those of our present Canon. Not that in-  
 deed he did not well know them, and also  
 esteem some of them; for he frequently  
 quotes them both in Preaching and Argu-  
 ing: but when he professes to declare the  
 true *Ecclesiastical Canon*, and genuin Works  
 of the Evangelists and Apostles; he forgets  
 all the Books of the Catalogue.

*Amyntor* is very earnest for the *Doctrine*,  
 and the *Revelation of St. Peter*; on the Ac-  
 count that they were approved, he saith,  
 by the Antients, in particular by *Origen*: he  
 saith, they may be preferred on that ac-  
 count before *Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews*,  
 and



and other Books of our present Canon ; which were doubted of, by the Antients. • We have just now heard *Origen* say the direct contrary : we have seen, he and those other Fathers make some doubt of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, the 2d of *Peter*, the 2d and 3d of *John* ; but they speak very favorably and very respectfully of them, and so as plainly to intimate that they incline to them : but the *Revelation*, and *Doctrine* of *Peter*, and other Books of the Catalogue, they never once name 'em, in recounting the Books of the Canon, or of the Evangelists and Apostles. The testimony of *Origen* in the case is so much the more considerable, because he was undoubtedly the most learned of all the Antients ; the first Divine the Church ever had, some doubt not to add *and the last*.

Our Antagonist has not yet done with us, he says ; “ The Council of *Laodicea*, about 360 Years after Christ, is the first “ *Assembly wherein the present Canon of Scripture was establish'd*. In so great a variety “ of Books, (those of the Catalogue, and “ those of the Canon) how could that “ Council determine which were the true “ Writings of the Apostles, and which not ; “ but by Revelation, or the written Testimony of their Predecessors ? Revelation “ on in the Case there was none ; and for

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“ Testi-

“ Testimony, I have the same Testimony  
 “ for many Books of the Catalogue. Else-  
 “ where (p. 48.) he adds; Divers Books of  
 “ the Catalogue were verily supposed by  
 “ the Antients, to be written by the E-  
 “ vangelists, Apostles, and their Synergists  
 “ whose name they bear: why then do we  
 “ not receive ’em into the Canon, since  
 “ the Authors of ’em were (at least) Com-  
 “ panions and Fellow-laborers of the A-  
 “ postles; as well as St. *Mark* and St.  
 “ *Luke*? Why are they excluded from the  
 “ Canon, and those Evangelists not exclud-  
 “ ed? If this quality (to have been a Com-  
 “ panion and Synergist of the Apostles)  
 “ was sufficient to entitle *Mark* and *Luke*  
 “ to Inspiration; why should it not do as  
 “ much for *Barnabas* and *Clemens Romanus*?  
 “ And if this be not all the reason; pray  
 “ let us know the true one, for I never  
 “ heard of any other.

He is entred, I confess, on the merits of  
 the Cause. He saith; the Council of *Laodicea*,  
 that establish’d our present Canon,  
 could no other ways distinguish the genu-  
 in Writings of the Apostles from those falsely  
 imputed to ’em, but by the Testimony of  
 their Predecessors: he hath the same Tes-  
 timony, for the Books of the Catalogue.  
 He knows no other reason, why *Mark* and  
*Luke* are believed to write by Inspiration,

but that they were Synergists and Companions of the Apostles. I answer,

That, he hath the same Testimony for some Books of the Catalogue, as we for the Books of the Canon; he attempted to prove from *Irenæus*, *Clemens* of *Alexandria*, and *Origen*, his only Witnesses. But *Irenæus*, I have shown, barely names some of those Books; and for others, he cites them only as good Witnesses of the true Ecclesiastical Tradition, not as Divine Scripture. *Clemens Alexandrinus* and *Origen*, may sometimes call them Scripture; in the sense that they so call the Apocryphal Books of the Old Testament, which they (with the Protestants) deny to be parts of that Testament: and in reciting the Books of the Canon, and Works of the Apostles, they wholly omit, and sometimes expressly censure these Books of the Catalogue.

The Council of *Laodicea*, nor any other, ever pretended, to establish the Canon of Scripture; which is precedaneous to all Councils, and receives no Authority from them, but they from it. *Amyntor* should have said, the Council of *Laodicea* is the first Assembly that, on occasion of some spurious, and many doubtful Books, declared which were the Books that had been certainly left to the Church by the Apostles and other Miraculous (first) Preachers.

'Tis no more true, *that*; *Mark* and *Luke* are supposed to write by Inspiration, only because they were Companions and Synergists of the Apostles: and *that*, the Council of *Laodicea* declared the Scripture-Canon, from only the Testimony of their Ancestors or Predecessors: that is, of the preceding Fathers, such as *Irenæus*, *Clemens* of *Alexandria*, and *Origen*. *Eusebius*, a long time before the Council of *Laodicea*, informed every body of the (sound) Reasons, why the Catholic Church receives some Books as Divine Scripture, and others not: his words are these. "Many Books have been published by Heretics, under the names of the Apostles; as the Gospels of *Peter*, *Thomas*, *Matthias*, and others; the Acts of *Andrew*, *John*, and divers more. But first, *they are not cited* [he means, not as Divine Scripture; for that they are indeed quoted by *Clemens* of *Alexandria* and *Origen* the learnedst of the *Antenicens*, he tells us before and after;] *by the Doctors of the Church*. Secondly, their way of writing is wholly different from the Spirit, *Gentus*, and Manner of the Apostles. Lastly, the Doctrine, Opinions, and other Matters, advanced in those Books, are so contrary to Truth, and to Orthodoxy; that we must not barely call them Spurious, but Absurd, and Impious. *Euseb.*

H. E. l. 3. c. 25. I

I must a little enlarge, on this important Testimony ; which overthrows all *Amyntor's* and *M. Dodwel's* Pretences, either for the Books of the Catalogue, or against those of the Canon.

These Books, saith *Eusebius*, are never cited (*as Divine Scripture*) by the Doctors of the Church : directly contrary to *Amyntor's* *I have the same Testimony of the Antients* (the very best and soundest of them) for these Books, that is alledged (or can be) by others for the Canon.

These Writings, says *Eusebius* again, *have nothing of the Apostolical Way and Spirit*. They want that honest Plainness, in their Style ; that Integrity of manners, that Elevation of Piety, that Salt of Virtue, that exemption from Partialities and Passions ; which so effectually recommend, and even point out to us, the Inspired Writings.

Above all, they are stuffed with abundance of notorious Falsities in Doctrine, and in Matters of Fact ; and those also *as ridiculous*, as they are erroneous.

Here sure we have, wherewith to answer, to all the bold Suggestions, of the Book under consideration. If the Author pretends, he has the same Testimony of some Antients, for the Books of the Catalogue, as there is for the Canon : *Eusebius* replies, none of the Doctors have quoted those Pieces, *as*

*Divine Scripture.* If he demands, what *other* Exceptions we can advance against them; or what we can say *farther*, for the Books of the Canon: *Eusebius* again answers, the Books of the Canon and of the Catalogue differ, as Pious and Impious; as True and False; as Credible and Ridiculous: and that these are the Churches Reasons, why she venerates the latter, and no less disesteems (to use no harder word) the other. In short, besides the unanimous Testimony of the Antients, which was *Amyntor's* only Reason: *Eusebius* insists, on the so *different Spirit*, and *Morality*, of these two sorts of Books; and on the *known* Verity in Matters of Fact, and *self-evident* soundness in Doctrine, so remarkably appearing in one, and wanting in the other. When *Amyntor* fairly satisfies these Answers, of this Learned Father; *Phyllida solus habeto.*

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*Farther*

*Farther Continuation of the  
Defence of the Canon.*

**I**T seems however, by all this we have gained nothing at all; for *Amyntor* says again. "If some of the Antients made these Exceptions, to the Books of the Catalogue; they were not so thought of, by some *whole Parties*, who made use of 'em. And, there is not a single Book of the New Testament, which was not refused by some of the Antients; as unjustly fathered on the Apostles, and really forged by their Enemies. And lastly, he has Witnesses for it, that; were the Books of the Canon never so certainly written by the Apostles: they have been however so changed, and that too divers times, that (perhaps) not a single Rib or Plank of the old *Argos* is left. To this effect he speaks at p. 19, 56, 60, 64.

But who told him, or how will he prove it, that; whereas some of the Antients made Exceptions to the Books of the Catalogue, they were otherwise thought of, by some *whole Parties* of Christians? It is not true, nor will he be able to bring any proof for it, from Antiquity; that the Gos-

pels, Acts, Epistles, Revelations, of the Catalogue, were espoused by *whole Parties* or *Sects*. On the contrary, they were read indifferently by *some* of all Parties; they had a little while *some* Credit with some Persons in all the Denominations of Christians: till for the Reasons, but now alledged from *Eusebius*, they grew (first) into disuse, and (then) were lost. Or if some few of 'em were the Compositions of professed Heretics, in order to countenance the Opinions of a small Party; as the Gospel of *Judas Iscariot*, said by *Epiphanius* to be devised by the *Cainits*, a Gnostic Sect: their manifest Disagreement to the *Doctrine* and *History* of the Gospels known by all to be Authentic, would (and actually did) immediately detect, and justly discredit them. Some whole Parties, says *Amyntor*, espoused some Books of the Catalogue. Yes, the *Cainits*; a Sect of two days continuance, and consisting (it may be) of twenty or thirty Persons, *Libertines*; boasted of the Gospel of *Judas*. How does this weaken the Judgment, made of that Gospel, by all the Churches, and reported by *Eusebius* and *Epiphanius*; that this and some such Pieces were foolish, and false, even to ridiculousness? We don't deny, there were such Books as these in the Catalogue; or *that* they were sometime in such credit, and even favoured



favoured by particular Persons of some Churches and Sects : but we say, the reasons alledged against them by the body and generality of the Churches, and that hereupon they soon became universally slighted, and shortly quite perished ; are just such Presumptions against them, as it will be in after-Ages against the (spurious) *Metasthenes*, *Berosus*, and *Philo* of *Annius*, that they had appeared but a very little while, e're they were wholly discredited by the concurrent Judgment and clear Arguments of Learned Men. As no body hereafter will appear for *Annius* his *Philo*, *Berosus*, or *Metasthenes* : 'tis an attempt not less worthy to be laught at, that the Gospel of *Judas* has now any Fautors ; or that any are found, who with great confidence do mind us, that, *it was esteemed some time by a Party*. When the Judgment that Learned Men, and the Catholic Church, made of this Gospel and other such like Pieces, has been confirmed by the immediate disappearing of the Books and Parties that maintained them ; what can we reasonably think of the matter but that, as the *Roman Orator* has worded it for us, *Opinonum portentosa delet dies ; Follies and Errors, that are too extravagant and monstrous, soon (like the Monsters of Nature) perish ?*

If there were any thing (indeed) that we could lay in the contrary Scale, had we  
any

any thing to alledg in favor of these condemned and lost Books; it were a necessary Caution and Justice, not to condemn 'em merely on the account that the Fathers and first Churches censur'd and rejected 'em: but their Judgment, and Reasons, against them; so approved by all, that the Books thereupon were all immediately *put to necessary uses*; ought to satisfy us concerning them.

To that; " There is not a single Book  
 " of the New Testament, which was not  
 " refused by some of the Antients, as un-  
 " justly father'd on the Apostles, and really  
 " forged by their Enemies; P. 56, 64.  
 Thought I, when I read it; has this Gentle-  
 man found some of the first (lost) Histo-  
 rians of the Church, pack'd up in a close Chest,  
 or Hogthead, and buried so many Ages un-  
 der ground? Has he recovered *Hegeſippus*,  
 or other Antient Writers; that are so much  
 praised by *Eusebius*, *St. Jerom*, *Photius*; and  
 other Fathers who were curious of Antiqui-  
 ties, and have left some small account of  
 those lost Treasures? But *Amyntor* quickly  
 delivered me, from my doubt, and my sur-  
 prize: for the proof he offers, is from very  
 vulgar Books; either mistaken, or misre-  
 ported by him. He says, " The *Manichees*  
 " rejected the whole New Testament; the  
 " *Ebionits* or *Nazarens*, who were the first  
 " Christi-

“ Christians, had a different Copy of St.  
 “ Matthew’s Gospel from ours, and the  
 “ Marcionits of St. Luke’s. John’s Gospel  
 “ was attributed, to Cerinthus; all the Epif-  
 “ tles of St. Paul were denyed by some, and  
 “ a different Copy of ’em shown by others:  
 “ and the seven Pieces we mentioned before,  
 “ (he means, the Epistles of St. James, St.  
 “ Jude, the second of Peter, the second  
 “ and third of John, the Epistle to the He-  
 “ brews, and the Revelation) were refused a  
 “ long time by all Christians, with almost  
 “ Universal Consent. P. 64, 65. By all  
 Christians, with almost Universal Consent, is  
 a Contradiction: for if by all Christians,  
 then with Universal Consent; and if, only  
 with almost Universal Consent, then not by  
 all Christians. But it matters not; for we  
 shall see, neither of ’em is True.

When his hand was in, why did he not  
 also (from as good Authority as he has a-  
 gainst the whole Canon of the New Testa-  
 ment) rout all the Authors of the Old Tes-  
 tament? For he might have said from Epipha-  
 nius, *Heres. Ebion.* c. 13. p. 38. “ Some  
 “ Jews, called Nazarites, rejected Sacrifices:  
 “ affirming that the Books of Moses which  
 “ we now have, are spurious, the true  
 “ Writings of Moses being altogether diffe-  
 “ rent from our Copies of them; which  
 “ true Writings are still preserved by their  
 “ Party.

“ Party. He repeats the same thing, *Ana-*  
 “ *cep.* p. 134 Others who owned the five  
 “ Books of *Moses*, yet refused all the other  
 “ Books of the Old Testament; *Epiphanius*  
 “ *Heres. Sam.* c. 2. To these last, for so  
 “ much as concerns the Old Testament,  
 “ were joined some *Ebionits*; saving that  
 “ they approved the Book of *Joshua*. *E-*  
*piphan. Heres. Ebion.* c. 13. Let us exa-  
 mine all this; it will be undeniable, that  
 almost all of it is false; and that little of it  
 that is true, is of no weight.

As to the *Manichees*, who ('tis pretend-  
 ed) denyed all the New Testament; that  
 is, denyed it to be written by the Authors  
 whose Names it carries, or said that at least  
 'tis so very much interpolated and corrupt-  
 ed, that 'tis now of no Authority: I will  
 reserve the Discussion of it, till we come  
 also to the Philosopher *Celsus*; who says  
 that the Christians had twice or thrice (or  
 more times) altered their Gospel.

“ The *Ebionits* and *Nazarens*, says our Au-  
 “ thor, had a different Copy of *Matthew's*  
 “ Gospel, from ours. Why does he con-  
 found the *Ebionits* and *Nazarens*, as if they  
 were one; and used the same Copy of *Mat-*  
*thew's* Gospel? They were no more the same  
 Sect of Christians, than the Church of *Eng-*  
*land* and the Quakers are: and were so far  
 from using the same Copy of *St. Matthew*,  
 that

that a common Enemy to both, witnesses, the Copy of the *Nazarens* was (πληρέστατον) most perfect; but that of the *Ebionits* (*Adulteratum & Mutilum*) corrupted by Interpolations, and defaced by Omissions. *Epiphanius Heres. Nazar. c. 9. Heres. Ebion. c. 13.*

This Gospel of the *Ebionits* lacked the two first Chapters; namely the Genealogy of *Joseph* from *David*, and the History concerning the three wise men out of the East: it began at the Baptism of *John*. As for the Additions, 'tis not said expressly what they were: likely, the History of the Woman that was taken in Adultery; related in many Copies of St. *John's* Gospel, particularly in those from which our *English* Translation was made. Also, some Answers of our Saviour, the Names also and Qualities of some of the Persons he healed. All which might be added, from common Report of the Disciples of our Saviour, and of others who knew the Facts and Persons. These things are said to be in the *Hebrew* Gospel, either of the *Nazarens* or *Ebionits*; by *Eusebius*, *Jerom*, *Austin*, *Photius*, and others. It was a hard Censure by *Epiphanius*, to call 'em *Adulterations*: if no more can be objected to the Copy used by the *Ebionits*, than these traditional Memoirs added in some places, it were (if extant) to be highly valued.

The

The omission in their Copy, of the two first Chapters, was indeed the occasion of great Disputes and Heats among the Antients. Not uncredibly, the *Ebionits* might follow the first Edition of St. *Matthew's* Gospel, or his Hebrew Gospel; which might begin at *Chap. 3.* that is, at the Baptism of *John*: but when *Matthew* published his Gospel the second time, in *Greek*; he might add the Genealogy, and the History of the Wise men. The *Ebionits* being all *Jews*, and understanding only the *Hebrew* (the *Syro-Chaldaic*) they adhered to the first Edition; rejecting the other: which also not being published (it may be) in *Judea*, but from some other place; they might doubt, whether it were really St. *Matthew's*. I can't see, what can be inferred from this, to the prejudice of Christianity, or the Canon of Scripture; except by Persons, who having a great mind to be Infidels, please themselves with Trifles.

But, "the *Marcionites* also had a different Copy, of the Gospel of *Luke*. I confess, the Antients speak of *Marcion's* Copy of St. *Luke*, as adulterated; particularly *Origen*, *Irenaus*, *Justin Martyr*, *Tertullian*: and lastly *Epiphanius*, who has noted the particular Alterations, and Substractions by *Marcion*; they are these. He omits the two first Chapters, beginning his Gospel with  
the

the Preaching of *John Baptist*, Præcursor to our Savior ; and where the Prophets were alledged, or were spoken of, he retrenches it. The rest, objected to *Marcion's Copy*, is but ill-grounded ; for they are only *various readings*, not designed Depravations. *Marcion* intended by these changes, to conform the Gospel, to the *Sentiments of his Party*, concerning the Prophets : but he so did this, that the substance of Christianity was still the same ; and that, 'twas easy to see, on which side the Truth lay. This last is proved by the event ; for the Marcionite Heresy soon became extinct of it self. An attempt to cut off such large portions of this Gospel, that were found in all the Copies used in the Churches, was too extravagant to succeed ; or be long countenanced, by any (sober) men, unless supported by Interest.

*Marcion* had been excommunicated by his own Father, who was a Bishop, for Fornication : hereupon, he went to *Rome* ; but Letters from his Father, following him, they would not there receive him into Communion. Enraged at this, he set up a new Sect ; being a Learned Man, he procured not a few Followers, who made him their Bishop : in this Station, he wrote divers Books ; and publish'd a new Copy of the Gospel by *St. Luke*, as also of *St. Paul's Epistles*,

pistles, making in both divers Alterations. He repented however, of these wicked endeavors against Truth, and Peace : he reconciled himself to the Church, undeceived most of his Followers ; and would have reduced the rest, but was prevented by Death. We have this Information, from the most Antient of the Latin Fathers ; *Tertullian*, *Præscript. c. 30.*

He alledges farther ; “ *John’s Gospel* was  
“ attributed by some, to the Heretick *Cerin-*  
“ *thus* : all the Epistles of *Paul* were de-  
“ nyed by some ; and a different Copy shown  
“ of ’em, by others. This (boasted) *dif-*  
“ *ferent Copy*, is only the Copy of *Marcion* ;  
voluntarily and piously retracted by himself.

That, any denied St. *Paul’s* Epistles ; meaning thereby, denied them to be his ; our Author will not prove, from any of the Antients. If by denying them, he means, rejected the Doctrine of ’em ; we grant, they were denied by the *Ebionits* : the witness against ’em is *Epiphanius*, *Hæres. Ebion. c. 13.* The *Ebionits* were those Jewish Christians, who contended that, the Law was to be observed together with the Gospel : *Paul* obtained against ’em a Decree, by the Apostles and Elders at *Jerusalem*, recorded *Acts 15. from vers. 24.* and often argues against their Opinion, in his Epistles. This occasioned their rejecting those



those Epistles; and a great many Calumnies, against the Person of that Apostle: among other things, they devised that, *Paul* was a *Gentile* of *Tarsus*, and that missing an intended Marriage with the Daughter of a Priest at *Jerusalem*, he set himself to destroy the Priesthood and the Law.

The ground on which *St. Paul's* Epistles were rejected by the *Ebionits*, namely that, in those Epistles he denies that the *Gentile Christians* were obliged by the Law of *Moses*, being condemned at the Council of *Jerusalem*, mentioned *Acts* 15. 24. and these Epistles being warranted, by express Authority of *St. Peter*, above quoted: methinks the *Ebionits* are here objected with as little color of Reason, as *Marcion* in the foregoing Paragraph.

'Tis another Exception, that; "*John's* Gospel was ascribed by some, to *Cerintus* a great Heretick. By the *Alogians*: but so, that this Party embraced in a little time the common Opinion, that; *St. John* was indeed the Writer of this Gospel. *Paul* of *Samosatum*, Patriarch of *Antioch*, and *Photinus* Archbishop of *Sirminum*, Heads of the *Alogian* party, even alledged for their Opinion the first Verses of *St. John's* Gospel; and made not the least doubt either of the Author or Authority of this Gospel. *Epiphanius*. *Heres. Samosat. & Photin.*

He still proceeds ; “ The Epistles of *James*  
 “ and *Jude*, the 2<sup>d</sup> of *Peter*, the 2<sup>d</sup> and 3<sup>d</sup>  
 “ of *John*, that to the *Hebrews*, and the *Re-*  
 “ *velation*, were refused a long time, by all  
 “ Christians, with almost universal Consent.

The least we can make of this, is that ;  
 the *Majority* of Christians rejected these  
 Writings, and that too a long time. But  
*Eusebius*, from whom our Author had his  
 intelligence, says otherwise ; he saith, “ those  
 “ pieces are of the number τῶν ἀντιλεγμένων,  
 “ but withal γνωρίμων τῶς πολλοῖς, i. e. *Gain-*  
 “ *said indeed*, by we know not who ; but  
 “ *received by the Generality*. *Euseb. H. E. l. 3.*  
 c. 25.

It seems however they were rejected by  
 some, and that also a long time. I answer,  
 they were all received, as soon as the  
 Churches had full communication with one  
 another ; by the Convention of Councils :  
 which, for small Books, containing nothing  
 that is singular, was soon enough. They  
 were received in the Council of *Laodicea*,  
 by observation of our Author himself.  
 Those seven pieces having nothing, as I  
 said, that is singular ; nothing that is wont  
 to be alledged by the contending Parties,  
 against one another : that Council was at  
 perfect Liberty, whether they would re-  
 ceive, or reject them ; they might do ei-  
 ther, without diminution of Interest, or  
 of

of Reputation. I believe therefore, seeing the Scripture Canon was so sufficient (in the Opinion of all Parties) without those Books; they were not owned by the Fathers of that Council, but on most convincing reasons. Such as, *that*, they had certain Information that these Books were read, as Writings of the Apostles, in all Churches of *antient* Foundation; *that* themselves found 'em quoted (as Apostolick Compositions) *in* and *from* the times of the Apostles: also *that* there is in them a likeness of the Thoughts, and Expression, and whatever else recommends to us the other Books of Scripture; to the Expression, and Thoughts of the other Divine Books: or more briefly, they are written with the same kind of Spirit, that the undoubted portions of Scripture are. There might even be Testimony from some of the Churches, that; they had still the first published Copies of these Books and Epistles; with their Dates corresponding to the Age and Time of the Writers of them.

Can any thing like to this, be said for the (rejected) Books of the Catalogue? Were they ever approved, in any Council? Are any of them quoted, or pretended to be quoted, by Writers of the Apostolick Age? Is it not said by those Antients who had read 'em, and could best judg of 'em;

they are composed with an Address, and Air, quite different from that of the Inspired Books; and are not only false in the Doctrine and Facts, but very foolish also? If some of 'em were read, in some Churches; was it not, only till the Catholick Church began to fill with learned and able Persons, who could make a Judgment? And when by these, they were discharged; was there any Contention for 'em, as there would certainly have been, if the same (or like) reasons could have been urged for 'em, as for the Books truly Canonical?

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*Of.*

Of the Philosopher Celsus, and  
Faustus the Manichee.

**I** Come therefore, to the last Refuge of the Anti-Christian party. "Admitting that, the Books of the Canon were (for the main of 'em) written by the Apostles, and their Synergists: they have been however so changed, and that divers times; that now there is little, perhaps nothing left of 'em, in those Books that stand for them, in our *present* Canon. The witness for this, is the Philosopher *Celsus*; to whom (great) *Origen* immediately answered. This Philosopher, says *Amyntor*, informs us; that "*the Christians*, as if they were drunk, had changed the Writing of the Gospel, three or four (or more) times: to the end they might deny whatsoever is urged against them, as before retracted.

The Philosopher however doth not say, *the Christians have changed (or altered) their Gospel*; he says only *τινες πιστευοντων*, some of those called *Believers*, have altered the writing of the Gospel. *Origen* makes us to understand the meaning of this, in his Answer to it; which is thus. "Indeed *Marcion*, and *Va-*

“ *lentinus*, and *Lucanus*, have presumed to  
 “ corrupt the Sacred Books. But what is  
 “ that to Christianity? He intended hereby ; does the Church follow the (vitiated) Copies of *Marcion*, or of (the two *Gnostics*) *Valentinus* and *Lucanus*? are theirs the Books we show, as our Rule of Faith and Manners? are these the Books read in the Churches of Christians?

In short, they would prove : the Books of our *present* Canon are corrupted, and greatly altered from what they were; and how is it proved? Why, *Marcion*, and *Valentinus*, and *Lucanus*, published some depraved Copies, that were rejected, so soon as they appeared, by all the Churches. Why do they not say, the Bibles of the English Church were corrupted in the Reign of K. *Charles the Martyr*? when the King's Printers published an Edition, in which the words of the Psalmist were thus printed, *The Fool hath said in his Heart, there is a God*: for which the Printers were fined 3000 *l.* and all the Copies suppress'd by the King's Order.

Has *Amyntor* any Evidence, that the Copies of *Valentinus*, *Lucanus* and *Marcion*, or any of them, is the Copy now used by the Catholick Church; or doth not he himself certainly know the contrary? He hath no such Evidence, and he knows the contrary; with certainty: therefore, he affect-  
 edly

edly abused his Reader; and too much forgot that, a deceitful Management of such Subjects as this, obliges his Reader to distrust all he says, and more especially his Quotations.

We shall be troubled but with one Opposer more, 'tis *Faustus* the *Manichee*; let us take the matter in our Author's own words. "Nay, as low as St. *Austin's* time; was there not a very considerable *Seet*, of the *Christians themselves*, I mean the *Manicheans*; who shewed other *Scriptures*, and denied the genuineness of the whole *New Testament*? one of these called *Faustus*, &c. In these few Lines, are more Falsties, than Periods.

For the *Manichees* were never accounted a *Seet of Christians*; and whether to be called *Christians* or not, they were far from being a very considerable *Seet*: nor did they show other *Scriptures*, as written by Christ or his Apostles; nor deny the genuineness of the whole *New Testament*, or so much as of any *Book* of it. All the business is, *Amyntor* knew not how to point the words of *Faustus*, nor how to render them into English; his Translation of 'em is not only false, but 'tis non-sense.

By the same figure of Speech, that he calls the *Manichees*, *Christians*; he must also call the *Mahometans*, *Christians*: nay there is

incomparably more reason, so to call the latter, than the former; but the latter were never so called by any, therefore neither may the former. *Manichæus* and *Mahomet* equally pretended that, he was the *Paraclet* (or Comforter) promised to his Disciples by our Saviour; in those words recorded by St. *John*: *If I go not, the Comforter (or Paraclet) will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him to you.—When he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all Truth.* John 16. 7, 13. *Mahomet* innovated but little, comparatively, in the Articles of Religion; *Manichæus* subverted all things. He taught, and his (few) Followers believed;

1.

There are two Co-eternal Principles, *God* and *Hyle*; the former the Author of all Good, the other of all Evil.

2.

*God* very hardly defends his Frontiers, from the encroachments of *Hyle*: even some part of his Divine Substance is captivated, by *Hyle*; nor shall it ever be wholly released.

3.

*God* is not the Creator of Mankind, but Nature.

4. The

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4.

The God of the Old Testament is a lying, and impotent Spirit ; false and harsh to his Servants : and who was neither able, nor willing to protect, or do good to the Synagogue, or Church of the *Jews* ; which served him, as an Hand-maid her Mistress.

5.

Jesus Christ was neither born, nor died ; but is the off-spring of the Holy Spirit, generated in the Earth, and subsisting in all living Creatures ; as also in all Fruits and Vegetables : the visible Jesus was only a Phantom.

6.

The Patriarchs and Prophets of the Old Testament, were the most flagitious of all men ; and ought not to be named, without some particular and remarkable Detestation.

7.

Souls are a part of the Substance of God ; and when the Body dies, they enter into other Bodies of men, or of Beasts, or Fish ; or of some Tree, Herb, or Flower, as their descent in the present Life hath been : except however, some few thorowly purified Souls, which re-ascend into Heaven ; where they live, and row in Boats of Light.

8.

The Sun and Moon are to be adored.

It

It is evident by these Articles of the *Manichean* Creed, that ; our Author might as well (or better) have said, " There is a *very* considerable *Sect* of *Christians* themselves, I mean the *Mahometans* ; who shew other Scriptures, and deny the Books of our present Canon. If this would be ridiculous ; the other, a *considerable Sect* of *Christians*, I mean the *Manichees*, is much more so.

Well, let 'em be a *Sect* of *Christians* ; yet they were not, as he saith, a *very considerable Sect*. St. *Austin*, who for nine years was of their Number, says ; *in tam exiguo, & pene nullo Numero vestro* : i. e. you are a very few, and almost none at all. And again, " I confess, good *Christians* are but few : but those of our Denomination, who are really good, are vastly more than all you *Manichees* whether good or bad. *Contr. Faustum*, l. 20. c. 23.

They shall be *Christians*, and a *very considerable Sect*. What then ? Why, they shew-ed other Scriptures, different from those that are read and used by the Church. If he means, they shew some Writings of *Manichæus* ; which, among them were valued, as the Scriptures of the Evangelists and Apostles are esteemed among *Christians* : 'tis true indeed, but not to the purpose. No more than if he had said ; the *Mahometans* show

show an *Alchoran*, as Christians do a Bible: therefore the Bible is a spurious, supposititious Book, never wrote by the pretended Authors of it. The question is, whether the Books of the New Testament are genuine; were indeed written by the Persons whose names they bear? *Amyntor* answers, No; for the *Manichees* (a very considerable Sect of Christians themselves) shew other Scriptures. Plainly, if he means, they also shew Books written by the Patriarch of their Sect; 'tis a random Bolt: the enquiry not being, Whether the *Manichees* had certain Books, which they followed; but, whether they pretended to prove, that the Christian Bible is not genuin, by shewing other (different) Copies of it? And this, without doubt, *Amyntor* intended: therefore I answer; they never pretended to shew other Copies of the Christian Bible, than those in the Catholic Church.

*Faustus*, their Advocate, never says; such a Text is not in our Copies: he says only, *I believe 'tis foisted into the Scripture-context, because it is a manifest Falshood.* The two *Paraclets*, *Manichæus* and *Mahomet*, were altogether unlearned; they both pretended that, the Christian Bible was in many places greatly corrupted: but this they proved, only by arguing against the particular Passages, which they disliked; not by  
pro-

producing other Copies, different from those of the Church. In short, the way they took, might prove the Scriptures of Christians to be *erroneous*; but by no means to be *spurious*, interpolated, or *not genuin*. How this madness of the *Paraclets*, is to be answered, we shall consider by and by; we must now examine what *Amyntor* has here added: he saith,

“ The *Manichees* not only shewed other Scriptures, but *denied also the genninness of the whole New Testament*. He hath no witness of it; *Fauslus*, whom he alledges, says the contrary. I don’t deny, he has truly recited those places of *Fauslus*, which he hath put into his Margin: but, as I intimated before, he hath neither seen, how to rightly point them, nor truly translate them; and the reason of both (I imagine) was, he overlookt the Explanations that *Fauslus* gives (in other Sections) of his meaning and intention.

First, As to the Epistles of St. *Paul*, and of the other Apostles, both *Fauslus* and St. *Austin* own expressly, they were allowed by the *Manichees*. Their words are these; *Apostolum (Paulum) Accipis? Maxime.* “ Do you receive Paul’s Epistles? Most readily, and especially. Lib. II. c. I. Again, Lib. 12. c. 24. *Epistolas Apostolorum Legitis, Tenetis, Predicatis.* “ You read, believe,

“ lieve, and even extol the Epistles of the Apostles.

As to the Gospels, *Fauftus* even disdains, that it should be questioned, whether they are received by the *Manichees*. “ If, saith he, by receiving the Gospel, you mean obeying it; it is the Rule of my Life and Conversation. You (Catholics) pretend to receive the Gospel, without giving any signs of it, in your manners: and you ask me, whether I receive it, who do all things that it requireth; even all things that might prevent such a Question. *Lib. 5. c. 1, 2.*

Elsewhere he deals more explicitly and clearly. *Lib. 32. c. 7.* “ We receive as Sacred Truth, all that *the Son* hath said; and even all that was said by his Apostles, after they were perfect and fully instructed. We pass over, and neglect what the Apostles said, while they were Novices and Ignorant; and what was objected to ’em, and not said really by ’em: as also what has been falsely imputed to ’em, by the Writers; namely that, Jesus was (foully) born of a Woman, was circumcised like the Jews, offer’d Sacrifice like the Gentiles, was baptized in a sordid manner, was carried about and miserably tempted by the Devil. These few things excepted, together with all their Quotations out of  
“ the

“ *the old Testament* ; we receive *the Writers* ;  
 “ [ he means the four Evangelists, ] and all  
 “ they have recorded, or taught in their  
 “ Books : more especially, we receive the  
 “ *Mystical Crucifixion* ; with the Precepts,  
 “ Parables, and whole Divine Word of  
 “ Christ.

If *Amyntor* had attended to these Passages, he would have perceived, how the words of this *Manichee* (which he cites) are to be Pointed, and Translated into the *English*. Let us first see, how *Amyntor* reads, and renders 'em.

*Solius Filii putatis Testamentum non potuisse corrumpi ; solum non habere aliquid quod in se debeat improbari : præsertim quod nec ab ipso scriptum constat, nec ab ejus Apostolis : sed longo post tempore a quibusdam incerti nominis viris, qui, ne sibi non haberetur fides scribentibus quæ nescirent, partim Apostolorum nomina, partim eorum qui Apostolos secuti viderentur, scriptorum suorum frontibus indiderunt, asseverantes secundum eos se scripsisse quæ scripserint.* He englishes it, thus. “ You think, that of all  
 “ the Books in the world, *the Testament of*  
 “ *the Son* only could not be corrupted, that  
 “ it alone contains nothing which ought  
 “ to be disallowed ; especially when it appears,  
 “ that it was neither written by himself, nor  
 “ his Apostles, but a long time after by cer-  
 “ tain obscure Persons, who, lest no credit  
 should

“ should be given to the Stories they told of  
 “ what they could not know, did prefix to  
 “ their Writings partly the names of the  
 “ Apostles, and partly of those who suc-  
 “ ceeded the Apostles ; affirming that what  
 “ they wrote themselves, was written by  
 “ these.

We shall see presently, Light and Dark-  
 ness are not more contrary, than this ac-  
 count of the Books that make the present  
 Canon of the New Testament, is to the  
 real Opinion of *Faustus*, and the intention  
 of his words in the Latin : but now I will  
 only take notice that, this Translation is a  
 pure piece of Jargon ; it offers to prove a  
 certain point, by a Consideration quite con-  
 trary to it. It represents the *Manichee* as  
 saying ; you (Catholics) think *the Testa-*  
*ment of the Son contains nothing that may be*  
*disallowed : because* it appears that, neither  
 himself nor his Apostles wrote it ; but cer-  
 tain obscure Fellows, who to make them-  
 selves believed in matters of *which they knew*  
*nothing*, put the Names of the Apostles to  
 their own Flams and Forgeries. I demand  
 now of *Amyntor*, was this a Reason, fit to  
 prove that the Testament of the Son has *no-*  
*thing in it that can be disallowed* ; even this,  
 'twas written by obscure Fellows, who hav-  
 ing feigned these Matters, set to 'em the  
 Names of the Apostles and their Successors ?

'Tis a Reason, that most plainly overthrows the Proposition, which it was to confirm; in short, 'tis a Bull, a Contradiction, and Nonsense. 'Tis as if I should say, the King of *Spain* is like to live this three seven years; for he is very infirm, and dying (in a manner) every day.

Well; let us again set down the Latin of the *Manichee*, and Pointing it right, see what sense it will make.

*Solius Filii, putatis, Testamentum non potuisse corrumpi; solum non habere aliquid, quod in se debeat improbari? Præsertim, quod nec ab ipso scriptum constat, nec ab ejus Apostolis; sed longo post tempore, a quibusdam incerti nominis viris: qui, ne sibi non haberetur Fides, scribentibus quæ nescirent; partim Apostolorum nomina, partim eorum qui Apostolos secuti viderentur, scriptorum suorum frontibus indiderunt; asseverantes, secundum eos se scripsisse quæ scripserunt.*

To be Englished thus. "Do ye think  
 "that, of all Books in the World, only the  
 "Testament of the Son could not be de-  
 "praved; and that, it alone contains no-  
 "thing that can be gainsaid? Especially,  
 "that of it (or that part of it) which not  
 "only, was not written by himself; but  
 "not by his Apostles: but a long time af-  
 "ter, by certain obscure Fellows. Who,  
 "lest no Credit should be given to what  
 "they



“ they wrote, concerning matters which  
 “ they could not know, put the names of  
 “ Apostles and their Successors, in the front  
 “ of their Books ; affirming that, what they  
 “ wrote themselves, was written by those  
 “ Apostles.

He speaks here of the Acts, Revelations, Epistles, Gospels of the Catalogue ; he says, the genuine *Testament of the Son* is much depraved by these spurious Books : which were contrived and published long after the decease of the Evangelists and Apostles that wrote the Books truly Canonical ; by obscure Wretches, that put to their feigned Gospels and Acts the names of *Andrew, Thomas, Philip, Bartholomew*, and other Apostles, and their Successors. Briefly, *Faustus* meant not in the least, to say ; the *Books of the Canon* are falsely intitled to the Apostles, and Evangelists, whose names they bear : but that, the *Testament of the Son* has been vitiated, and disgraced, by divers other Gospels, Acts, Epistles, meaning *those of the Catalogue* ; which never were the Works of true Apostles, but of certain Botchers, who stitching together some flying Reports, exposed their wares to sale, under the names of some of the Apostles, and of their immediate Successors.

His other Citation, out of *Fauftus*, is no better ; nor (upon the main) better understood by him : it is this.

*Multa à Majoribus vestris, eloquiis Domini nostri inserta sunt verba, quæ nomine signata ipsius cum ejus fide non congruunt ; præsertim quia, ut jam sæpe probatum à Nobis est, nec ab ipso hæc sunt, nec ab ejus Apostolis scripta : sed multa, post eorum assumptionem à nescio quibus, & ipsis inter se non concordantibus Semi-judæis, per famas opinionesque comperta sunt.*

He renders it in these words. “ Many things were foisted by your Ancestors, into the Scripture of our Lord ; which, tho marked with his Name, agree not with his Faith. And no wonder, since, *as those of our Party have already frequently proved,* these things were neither written by himself nor his Apostles : but several matters after their decease were pick'd up from Stories and flying Reports, by I know not what set of Half-Jews ; and these also not agreeing among themselves.

Reach me the Ferula, for they are School-boys Mistakes. In this place, *Jam* is not, *already* ; or *sæpe*, *frequently* : much less is *à Nobis*, *those of our Party*, which it never signifies ; and had *Fauftus* intended to say *by those of our Party*, he would have said *a Nostris*.

*tris.* His words *Jam sape probatum est a Nobis*, were thus meant, *As I have but now proved, by divers Examples*: for he refers to the several Examples he had just before given, of *Doctrines and Facts*, which (as he supposed, and supposed he had proved it) were added to the Gospels of Matthew and Luke; only he speaks of himself, as Authors are commonly wont, in the Plural number, saying *à Nobis* for *à me*.

But from all this, *Amyntor* infers, and immediately subjoins; *since therefore the Manichæans rejected the whole New Testament, &c.* You are a great deal too hasty, Son; your Friends the *Manichees* received the whole *Genuine Canon* of the New Testament: they rejected only, the corrupt part of the *Testament of the Son*, even the Gospels and other pieces of your Catalogue; and some Passages which (they pretended) had been unduly inserted into the *Epistles and Gospels of the Canon*; nor will you ever make more of your Citations from *Faustus*, by whatsoever stretching and straining them.

By this it appears, how much our Author is pleas'd with Hyperbolies; he says, "A very considerable Sect, of Christians themselves, I mean the *Manichees*, shewed other Scriptures, and denied the *Genuineness of the whole New Testament*. He should have said, a small Party, less Christians by

much than, the Mahometans, denied the genuineness of *those parts* of the Gospels and Epistles ; where the Books of the Old Testament are cited : as also where mention is made of the Genealogy, Birth, Temptation, Baptism, or Death of Christ ; because they supposed, Christ was God only, and Man not at all ; and that it was unworthy of God to be born, tempted, baptized, or put to death.

The Objection however hath still some force : 'tis thus far true, that some there were who said, the Books of the Canon are not now altogether sincere ; they are corrupted by divers Additions. Yes, the *Manichees* said so : and if our Author had pleased, he could have told us, by what Arguments they were convinced of their Impertinence and Folly ; it would very well have become him, to have taken that (little) farther pains.

---

*Of the (pretended) Interpolations, and Additions, in the Books of the Canon.*

**T**HE *Manichees* said: The ~~Book~~ the Spirit of Truth, promised to the Faithful by Christ, even the blessed *Manichæus*, was sent by God, to inform his Elect, and all other his People, concerning his farther Will and good-pleasure: as also to instruct them, what of the New Testament is genuine, and to be received by all; and what to be rejected, as either *mistaken* by the Apostles yet unperfect, or since *added* by others to the Writings of the Apostles and Evangelists.

Being asked, What these Mistakes, and Additions were? They answered; whatsoever is said of the Genealogy, Birth, Baptism, Temptation, and real Death of Christ; all quotations out of, and all honourable mention any where made concerning the Patriarchs, Prophets and Writers of the Old Testament. When demanded, farther; on *what grounds* they presumed to reject, either the Old Testament, or such large portions of the New? They replied; *Moses* has blasphemed Christ, in those words of his,

*He that is hanged, is accursed of God, Deut. 21. 23.*

The God of the Old Testament, *said the* Manichees, appears to have been a wicked, and impotent Spirit; chiefly, by his commanding the slaughter of *innocent* Beasts, for ~~the Sins~~ of *guilty* Men: and by dealing so ~~unjustly~~ with his Slaves the *Jews*. Therefore, his Prophets also are to be rejected: as for the same reason we would (and do) reject the Priests and Prophets, of the other evil Gods of the Nations.

It is not to be thought, *so they went on*, that, Jesus Christ commended, or his Apostles cited, the writings of the Prophets and Servants of such an impure God: no, all such Citations and Commendations have been (undoubtedly) added, by certain People that were half Jews and half Christians, to the Gospels and Epistles of the New Testament. So also was whatsoever is found in those Books concerning the Genealogy, Birth, Circumcision, Temptation, Baptism, or Death of Christ. Who being God, underwent all these things; only in appearance, and by that *Phantom* (which the Vulgar took to be real Christ) that represented him: even as Angels seem to have Bodies, to be clothed, to eat and drink; when in truth they neither drink nor eat, nor are clothed, nor have real Bodies.

This was the *Manichean* Doctrine, with respect to the Christian Religion, and Books of the New Testament ; to which they added the eight Articles, before mentioned, taught 'em by *Manicheus*, and his Second *Adimantus*, and maintained by *Faustus*.

Says St. *Austin*, One may easily make short work, with this wild People. For whereas all depends on the Authority of *Manicheus* : I desire to know, how they prove he was that Paraclet ; that Spirit of Truth, that was to lead us into all truth ; promised by our Saviour ? They answer indeed, out of St. *John's* Gospel ; *I will send the Comforter (or Paraclet) the Spirit of Truth, who shall lead you into all Truth* : but they say withal, the Gospels (and other Books of the New Testament) are so corrupted, that there is no (absolute) trusting to 'em. We demand a Witness, on behalf of their Paraclet : they alledg one, out of our own New Testament ; which (they say) is a false and corrupted Witness. Any Book or other Witness, convict of Falshood and Corruption, in bearing its Testimony ; especially, of *many* Corruptions, and Falsities ; is incapable of standing again as a Witness (merely on its own Credit) in whatsoever Case. Briefly, by accusing the New Testament, as a Book in so many places

corrupted; they deprive themselves of whatsoever benefit, that might arise to them, from its Testimony.

But to forgive to Fools, an oversight, that destroys their whole Cause: | *St. John* shall be a sincere Evangelist, in speaking of the Spirit, or Paraclet; tho the other Books and Writers, and he himself in other matters, hath been mistaken, or is corrupted by others. But as this is the Evangelist, who has foretold the sending of the Paraclet; so he hath also foretold *the time* when he should come: for he saith, *John 7. 39. The Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.* The reason, it seems, that the Spirit was not *then* given, was; because Jesus not being yet glorified, that is, not departed from his Disciples into Heaven, 'twas not necessary he should be yet given: but when *Jesus* was dead, raised, and ascended into Heaven; then was the time to send forthwith the Paraclet. Accordingly, we find in the Acts of the Apostles, in the second Chapter of those Acts; fifty days after our Savior's Resurrection, and but ten days after his Ascension *into Glory*, the Spirit (the promised Paraclet) descended on the Apostles. What room now is here for *Montanus*, or for *Manichæus*? The Spirit of Truth was to come, so soon as Christ was gone



gone from his Apostles, and entred into the *Glory* designed for him; but *Montanus* came not till 170 years after Christ was glorified, and *Manicheus* (as if our Savior had utterly forgot his promise) not till the year 275.

The Father goes on; I will take no Advantage of all this; I will otherwise convince you, that your Patriarch was a Seducer, and a Liar. He says, the Books of the New Testament have been corrupted, by Additions made to 'em: certain *Half-Jews* have added Citations out of the Old Testament; and false Tales concerning the Parentage, Nativity, Circumcision, Temptation, Baptism, Death of Christ: all which are impossible fables, because he that was God, and not Man at all, could neither do nor suffer any of these things. Therefore I ask, did *Manicheus* alledg, or can you produce, any Copies of the New Testament; wherein all these things are not found? When some Copies of a Book have something, that others have not; there is either Mistake, or Fraud, in one or other of them: and we are wont in that Case, to consult more Copies; especially those that are Antient, and those that are preserved in Libraries, or in Archives that have been long and religiously kept. From the greatest  
number

number of Copies, and those that are most Antient; and that have been kept in places, where they could not easily or likely be violated, by Additions or Substractions; we judg reasonably, and safely, concerning the Copies that are suspected or questioned. I pray, therefore, show us, or refer us to Copies, where these (pretended) Additions are not read; in what Libraries, in what Archives of Churches or Sects, are such Copies to be found? But as you never pretended, to any such Copies; so *'tis impossible, there should be any such.* For the New Testament being in the hands of *all* Christians, and read in *all* Churches: these (pretended) Additions could never be made, and least of all in the publick Books of the Churches; without being observed, known, and opposed in their very first appearance. Are there so many thousand Churches, and distant from one another so many thousand Miles, under the Inspection of so many distinct Bishops, and Presbyters; nay and of several Princes: and could all these Books, think you, be corrupted, without their observing it? Or what is as impossible, or rather *more* impossible; by common Agreement? For are so many wont to agree, to false Additions, to their Books of Religion?

These

These are some of the Arguments, of that discerning Father, against *Faustus*, and his Patriarchs *Manichæus* and *Adimantus*: I am of opinion, we have here given to *Amyntor*, as 'tis said in the Proverb, *A Rowland for his Oliver*. *Faustus* is not so considerable, but that St. *Austin* appears much more considerable. In *Faustus*, one may see an unreasonable Infidelity, a precipitate and ungrounded Scepticism: in St. *Austin*, Caution and Faith, led on by Judgment; a Judgment enlighthned by Learning, and Experience.

I omit what he saith, of the God of the Old Testament; of the Patriarchs and Prophets; as forein to my present Undertaking and Subject; I only observe farther, that; What he hath so well argued against *Montanus*, and *Manichæus*, is no less effectual, against the third *Paraclet*, *Mahomet*, who arose after St. *Austin*. If *Montanus* in the year after Christ 170, or *Manichæus* in 275, could not be the promised *Paraclet*; because the Evangelist, on whose Authority their Claims are founded, sets a time (*when Jesus shall be glorified*) that disagrees so widely from the time of their appearance, and agrees so exactly with the time of the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles: I say, if for this so clear Reason; neither  
*Monta-*

*Montanus* in 170, nor *Manichæus* in 255, could be that *Paraclet* that was to lead into all Truth: much less could *Mahomet* be he, in the year after our Lord 612; seeing neither did *Mahomet* pretend to any other ground, for his Novelties, but those words in St. *John's* Gospel concerning a future *Paraclet*. See Father *Simon's* *Belief and Customs of the Eastern Nations*, Chap. 15. When the same Impostor, as his Predecessor *Manichæus*, accuses the Bible of Christians; as having many corrupt Additions, and other Falsifications; he is unanswerably refuted by the same Considerations, that were objected, (before) to *Manichæus*.

S I R, I have now answered as fully as (I think) is needful, to a Book; which, you tell me, is so much magnified by the Anti-Christian Party about Town. They say, this Book has so discovered, and laid bare, the (unsound) Foundations of Christianity; that 'tis now to be blown down by the very weakest Breath: and *that*, if an Answer any what valuable, be made to it; the Author will take occasion thereat, by *new* and *more* and *greater* Authorities, to level all *revealed Imposture* with the very Ground. He can level nothing by such an attempt, but his own Reputation; nor do I think, he approves

proves these impious Boasts, of that Party of men. It may be questioned, whether he had any formed Design, to attack Christianity, by this Book: it seems rather, that, when his Passions were up, against Mr. *Blackhal*, he inadvertently dropt these Exceptions and Doubts, of which some make so bad use; or (rather) strain such malignant Consequences, from them. To cut out work for Mr. *Blackhal*, with whom he was so much displeased; he discharged upon him, whatsoever occurred to his Memory, from first Antiquity; with intent to engage him in laborious, difficult, and unwelcome Searches. However it be, it appears he is a Person of great Abilitys, and Address, in matters of this kind: and it were to be wish'd, men of very distinguishing Parts and Sufficiency, were not made Enemies to the Church, or to the Public, either by being abused, or because they are neglected. You shall not awe such Persons by your Menaces, or your Severities; when even such mean Rogues as House-breakers, and Highway-men, are not scared by the Gibbet and Gallows. The only effect to be expected, from neglect of, or harshness toward such, is that, they go at length into the interests of some disaffected Party, or erect a new one: after which, whatsoever becomes of them,

them, the Public and the Church are sure to be infinitely more losers; than it would have cost to gain, and to assure them, to the Public. But, *manum de tabulâ*; for who made me a Counsellor to the Church, or the Public? You will please, Sir, to believe that, I am, with great Tenderness and Respect,

Your assured Friend,

Sept. 29,  
1699,

STEPHEN NYE.

---

There

There is room, in this Leaf, for two Stan-  
za's by Sir *William Davenant* : Which are per-  
tinent to the Subject, that we have been  
treating.

I.

*In the dark Walk, to our last Home, design'd ;  
'Tis safe, by well-instructed Guides to go :  
Lest we in Death too late the Science find  
Of what in Life 'twas possible to know.*

2.

*And if they say (while daily some renew  
Disputes) your Oracles are doubtful still ;  
Like those of Old : yet more regard is due  
To Pains, where so uneasy is the skill.*

THE END.





A N

## A B S T R A C T

Of the foregoing

## D I S P U T A T I O N .

**T**HE Controversy hath been,  
partly concerning the Books of  
*the Canon*, and partly concerning those  
of *the Catalogue*.

*Of the Books of the Canon,*  
*Amyntor says;*

1.

**A**LL the Authors of the Canon,  
were wholly strangers to one a-  
nothers Writings.

I have proved on the contrary,  
that, *Mark's Gospel* is but an Abridg-  
ment, of the Gospel by *Matthew* ;  
that, *St. Luke* (in the first Verses of  
H his

his Gospel) commends the Gospels of *Matthew* and *Mark*: that, *St. John* approved the Gospels of these three former Evangelists; and wrote his Gospel, only by way of Supplement to theirs: that, *St. Peter* commends the Epistles of *Paul*; and signifies at the same time, that they were commonly read, and a bad Use made of them by some: that, the Catholick Epistles, (by *James*, *Peter*, *Jude*, and *John*;) the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, and the *Revelation*; being written either to whole Nations, or to all Christians, were certainly publish'd as soon as written.

## 2.

*At least, the Clergy and Churches were unacquainted with the Books of the New Testament, till 130 years after Christ.*

I have shown, they were quoted by all the (extant) Writers of those Times; by *Barnabas*, *Hermas*, *Ignatius*, *Polycarp*, *Clemens Romanus*: and by  
some

some not Extant, as *Papias* of *Hierapolis* in the year 110. Farther that, the four Gospels, the Acts, Revelation, Catholick Epistles, and Epistle to the *Hebrews*, being written for general Information, or to whole Churches or Nations; they were written to be publish'd, and publish'd as soon as written: and that, 'tis a very precarious and withal an unreasonable supposition, that, the Clergy and Churches were ignorant of the publish'd Books of their Religion. That, the contrary (in truth) is evident: for as early as *Justin Martyr's* time, the Churches entertained a Reader; besides the Deacons, Presbyters, and Bishop; who read the Old and New Testaments to the Assembly.

3.

*It was impossible, when the Books of the Canon first appeared, to distinguish them from spurious Gospels, Acts, Epistles, and Revelations; which were also entitled to the Apostles.*

I have replied, there was nothing more obvious or easy to the *then* Churches; than to distinguish them, with absolute certainty; by their Agreement or Disagreement with the Doctrine, and History of our Saviour; which *those* Churches had but just before received by word of Mouth, from the Apostles and other first (miraculous) Preachers.

## 4.

*Different Copies were shown of all the Canonical Books, from the very first: the Nazarens and Ebionits had a Gospel of St. Matthew, different from ours; the Marcionits of St. Luke, and of the Epistles of Paul.*

I have answer'd, *Marcion* was so ingenuous, as to retract his vitiated Copies of St. Paul's Epistles, and of St. Luke's Gospel; the Copy of *Matthew* used by the *Nazarens*, was (say the Antients) πληρέστατον, *most perfect*: the *Ebionite* Copy, being probably St. Matthew's

Matthew's first (or Hebrew) Edition of his Gospel, did indeed want the two first Chapters ; and in time they had added some *Traditional Memoirs*, from the Witness of some Disciples that had seen the Facts, and knew the Persons ; it were to be wish'd, we had still this Copy.

5.

The Books of the Canon were imputed by some very considerable Sects of Christians, not to the Apostles whose names they bear ; but either to Hereticks, or to a set of Half-Jews and Half-Christians, who had written them only from hearsay and flying Reports.

I have evinced, that, only the Gospel of John was ever mislaid : and that, the Alogians soon saw their Error in the Case ; not only receiving that Gospel, but receiving it also (with all other Sects and Churches) as St. John's. That, the Manichees (the other considerable Sect of

H 3      Christians

*Christians* intended in the Objection) owned our four Gospels, the Epistles of *Paul*, all the Catholick Epistles, and all other Books of our Canon: in short that, *Amyntor* certainly (and inadvertently enough) mistook the meaning of the Author (*Faustus the Manichee*) whom he alledged.

## 6.

*The Philosopher Celsus complains that, the Christians had alter'd their Gospel, three or four, or more times.*

*Celsus*, I have said, meant this, of the Copies of *Marcion*, and of *Valentinus* and *Lucanus*: which never were used in the Churches; but at their first appearance were detested, and rejected by all Churches.

of

*Of the Books of the Catalogue,  
he saith;*

1.

**M**ANY of 'em have rather been  
supprest, by the strongest side  
in the Church, than lost: and that, pro-  
bably they were the genuin Works of the  
Apostles.

I have granted, divers of 'em  
might be the real Works of those  
whose names they bore; and that  
our loss of them is to be regretted:  
but the whole body of Learning has  
suffer'd extremely, by the loss of some  
of the best Books in every Science  
and Art. Notwithstanding, the Rea-  
sons alledged by the Antients against  
many of them, are sufficient to con-  
vince us that, there was just cause  
to slight, and even to suppress them.

## 2.

*The Epistles of Barnabas, Ignatius, Polycarp, Clemens Romanus, and the Pastor of Hermas, were esteemed by the Antients to be as good Scripture, as any part of the New Testament: they were received, by the soundest of the Antients; who at the same time rejected divers Books of our present Canon, namely, the Revelation, the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Epistle of Jude, the second of Peter, and the second and third of John.*

But I have produced unquestionable Testimony, of the Antients; that these lesser pieces of the Canon were always received by the generality, of Churches and Christians: and that, when they were owned in the Council of Laodicea, 'twas on very good grounds; on the same Reasons which convinced 'em of the genuineness of the other Books of the New Testament. As to Barnabas, Ignatius, Polycarp, Hermas, and Clemens Romanus;



*manus*; they were considered indeed as pious and well-minded Compositions; but were read no otherwise, but as we now read in our Churches the *Apocryphal* Books of the Old Testament: which, for all that, we directly deny to be *Divine Scripture*; and many think them not very Edifying or Profitable, especially some of them.

3.

The principal (*Ante-nicen*) Fathers quoted divers Gospels, Epistles, and Acts of the Catalogue; as Scripture, and Canonical: and this is all that can be said, for the Books of the Canon; and more than can be truly said, for some of them.

I have alledged the very words of those Fathers: it appears, they never cite the Books of the Catalogue, as *Divine Scripture*; and in reciting the Books of the true Scripture-Canon and of the Apostles, they always omit all the Gospels and other Books of the  
Cata-

Catologue. I grant however, that the mere Terms *Scripture* and *Canonical* were at first applied to all Ecclesiastical Books, that were judged Orthodox; as also to the Apocryphal Books of the Old Testament; to distinguish them from the Moral pieces, of the Heathen Philosophers: but the (alleged) Fathers have made us know the great difference, they put between mere *Scripture*, and *Divine Scripture*; between *Canonical*, and *Inspired*.

---

*Nam pudet, hæc opprobria Nobis  
Et dici potuisse, & non potuisse Refelli.*

---

I have alleged the very words of those Fathers: it appears they never use the Books of the Catalogue, as **FINIS.** Books of the true Scripture-Canon and of the Apostles, they always omit all the Gospels and other Books of the

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